

# First Presbyterian Church of Glidden

July 2014



My favorite novel is *Les Misérables*, by Victor Hugo. Now, you've all probably heard the most famous story from the novel – that of the bishop and the candlesticks – but that is only the novel's (long-winded) introduction. The true masterpiece of Victor Hugo's work lies in the competing loyalties of the characters.

The story begins with Fantine, a young mother whose lover has abandoned her to poverty. She is forced to choose between love for her daughter, Cosette, and her dignity as a human being.

Jean Valjean starts a new life, after his encounter with the bishop, and builds a factory in a new town. He brings justice and economic prosperity to an area sorely in need of both. But soon, he hears news of a man who will be sentenced to life imprisonment for a crime that Valjean committed in his former life. He must choose between his responsibility for his crimes and the good he has done in his community.

Marius is a young revolutionary who falls in love with a woman on the eve of the revolution. He must choose between romantic love and political freedom.

Every character in the story has a great test of loyalty, but none is more striking than that of Inspector Javert. Javert is the ideal officer of the law. He is incorruptible and unquestioning. He always does exactly as the law demands. That is until Jean Valjean – a man he has relentlessly hounded through the years – saves his life. Javert must choose between loyalty to a good man, who saved his life, and his obsessive obedience to the law.

Victor Hugo says of Javert's dilemma, "He held before him two paths, both equally straight, but he beheld two; and that terrified him. Him, who had never in all his life known more than one straight line. And, the poignant anguish lay in this, that the two paths were contrary to each other... Which of the two was the true one?"

I find that most of the moral dilemmas in our lives have more to do with competing loyalties than obedience to a set of laws. We can follow all the laws as perfectly as Inspector Javert, but still we will find straight roads that lead us in contrary directions. We will ask, "Which of the two roads is the true one?" but the answer often does not reveal itself. Yet still, we must choose.

This is just a small part of why the Christian life is a life of grace and not a life of rule-following. It is impossible to find a straight road that will always point us to God's will. We will often have to choose between two goods or between two evils – but that is simply the way the world is. Instead of focusing on walking the straight road, Jesus Christ calls us to live a life of love. Love accepts that we'll make mistakes along the way and provides us grace when we misstep.

Victor Hugo knew the grace of Jesus Christ and sought to reveal it to us, against the background of Revolutionary France, and that is why I will always enjoy reading *Les Misérables*.

Blessings,  
Pastor Brian

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## Meet the Members MTM

Our journey today takes us down the street to meet good friends and longtime members of First Presbyterian Church. We met up with Leland and Phyllis Bender at the Carroll Health Center, where Phyllis resides and Leland visits often.

Phyllis was born a child of Wendell and Leah Greene while Leland's parents were Bernard "Bub" and Eula Bender. Both sets of parents were longtime Presbyterians. In fact, Leland and Phyllis first memory of meeting was in Sunday school. They even recall their teacher being Irma Gordan, also a longtime teacher at First Pres.

These young children were born, raised and educated in the Glidden area. The only time they journeyed beyond Carroll County and their Glidden roots was when Leland was in the military.

School days were good to these young people as they enjoyed their teachers and friends. Leland was quick to point out that Phyllis was the better student as she graduated valedictorian of her class in 1952. In addition to working for good grades Phyllis also worked part time at Greene's Grocery store which was operated by her parents.

Following their school years they continued to date and both began their careers as Phyllis began working in the Glidden Cooperative creamery, where she performed office duties. Leland also worked at the Creamery hauling milk, working in the processing division, and doing other jobs around the plant.

August 7, 1955 on a very hot day Phyllis and Leland were married in the First Presbyterian Church in Glidden with Rev. Harrison Becker officiating. They honeymooned in Wisconsin and nearly froze as the temperature was only in the 40's and these two had only taken summer clothes – fit for the hot days of Iowa.

Life was good for Leland and Phyllis until 1957 when Uncle Sam called and drafted Leland into the United States Army. Leland was stationed at Fort Lewis Washington during his two years of active duty. He also served two years inactive duty and two years standby. While in Washington Phyllis traveled there to be with Leland and during her stay she got homesick for Glidden

and its people and flew home for a short visit before returning to Fort Lewis. While in Washington Phyllis worked 18 months for the American Red Cross as a teletype operator.

In August of 1959, it was time for the Benders to return home and pick-up their old jobs for a short period of time. After they were properly settled in Glidden, Phyllis began working at the Glidden Graphic and Leland moved into sales. Leland sold feed for Mooreman's Feed for 21 years. He then spent 20 years servicing and selling cars for Macke Motors, Gerald Hall and Scott Hansen. Phyllis finished her employment career by working for Merle Norman in Carroll.

The Benders recalled two impressionable moments in the church's history. As small children they watched with delight the excavation of the soil under the church to form the present lower level of the church. They recall the hard work by women and men alike as this was truly a church project. Another event they recall was one they

participated in and that was the removal and refurbishing of the pews and the installation of the carpet in the sanctuary. Again, church members rolled up their sleeves and went to work.

The Benders both like to play cards as a pastime and currently Phyllis is a computer junkie while Leland is involved with cars as he once raced and restored

cars as a hobby. Presently, they both like to collect antiques.

Health issues have slowed the Benders lives as Leland has had open heart surgery, a pacemaker installed, and has spent time in the Carroll Health Center for recovery. He now lives at 303 Arizona Street, apartment 1 in Glidden and he regularly visits Phyllis at the Carroll Health Center. Phyllis has been there for the past 22 months. She suffers from diabetes, Parkinson's, and a very unstable equilibrium which causes her to fall. She spends most of her days in a wheel chair. Given their health problems the Benders are still upbeat and a joy to visit.

Extended family of Leland and Phyllis include their daughter, Brenda and her husband, Jeff Rickabaugh of Des Moines. They also have two grandchildren, Benjamin and Joe who will both be in college this fall.



Leland is the last living male Bender making his home in Glidden so when Leland dies it will conclude four generations of Benders in Glidden.

The Benders have served the church on the Board of Deacons, the Session, housing a young prospective minister by the name of Scott Burkley on his first visit to Glidden, and many other responsibilities around the church.

The church wishes the Bender a fulfilling life and God's Blessings to two long term families of the Glidden area.



## Presbyterian Disaster Association

In the month of July, our church will be taking up a special offering for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA). PDA is the emergency and refugee program of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

When Superstorm Sandy struck the East Coast in late 2012, it caused roughly \$65 billion in damages. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance responded quickly. We helped to clean up flood damage in Atlantic City and repaired churches in Queens, New York. We provided aid and expertise to Lutheran, Methodist, Episcopal, and non-denomination churches affected by the storm. The Red Cross asked us to help coordinate volunteer housing and offered us a grant of \$1.4 million to get the job done right. PDA is leader in providing disaster relief.

When an EF5 tornado struck Moore, Oklahoma in 2013, Presbyterians sent over 50 work teams to clean up the damage. The first offer of assistance came in at 4:00am, the morning after the tornadoes. In 2012, we provided food for malnourished children in the Congo and helped clean up after the Fukushima disaster in Japan. We provided for refugees of violence in Pakistan and Syria.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is one of the most remarkable things that we Presbyterians do, and if you should choose to give to the One Great Hour of Sharing in April or directly to PDA this July, then you are helping to provide relief to people who suffer through the worst disasters that this world can manage. PDA is a huge part of why I am proud to be a Presbyterian.

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## Upcoming Retreats

at Lakeshore Center at Okoboji (formerly the Presbyterian Camp)

Young at Heart Retreat  
September 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>

We often think of “camp” and think it is just for kids. NOT TRUE! Camp can be for God’s older children, too! We have hotel-style rooms, a beautiful Lodge, and all we need is YOU!

Come to this mid-week event to experience God in this beautiful, sacred space! Watch the sunrise by the cross. Take a canoe ride. Sit around a campfire and eat s’mores! Take in the Clay County Fair, one of Iowa’s best fairs! Or, just take time to walk around the camp and look at the birds and the wildlife. We have lots to offer! Check in will be anytime after 3 p.m. on Tuesday and our first activity will be fellowship time at 5:30 p.m. before supper at 6 p.m.

Hobby & Art Retreat  
September 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>

Come for a weekend, bring your supplies, work on your projects, and leave the cooking up to us! We are the perfect place for you to work on your masterpieces because we have:

- Plenty of work space
- Incredible fall scenery
- Bonfires
- Canoeing & Kayaking
- Great food & helpful staff!
- & more!

Call Lakeshore Center at Okoboji for a reservation, 712-337-3313.

### Quote of the Month

“When I do good, I feel good. When I do bad, I feel bad.  
That’s my religion.”

— [Abraham Lincoln](#)

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“A baby is God’s opinion that the world should go on.”

— [Carl Sandburg](#)

## *The Masters of Love*

This past month, the Atlantic Magazine published an article on the so-called “Masters of Love.” The masters of love are the married couples who consistently maintain happy marriages for decades. They are contrasted with the “disasters” who always seem to fight and whose marriages break down over time. The article seeks to identify the key differences between the “masters” and the “disasters,” and to learn what the secret to a lasting relationship really is.

If you want the full details on what the author, Emily Smith, uncovered about relationships, then you’re going to have to read her article on The Atlantic website – but she told a story that seemed to hit the nail on the head.

John and Julie Gottman, researchers and founders of the Gottman Institute, set up an experiment on the University of Washington campus in 1990. They invited 130 newlywed couples to enjoy a breakfast retreat at their lab – which had been retrofitted to also be a welcoming bed and breakfast. Couples were observed performing regular household chores and spending time together. Six years later, follow-up interviews informed the researchers of which marriages were successful and which were not.

An interesting pattern emerged from the data gathered at that fake bed and breakfast. The Gottman’s noticed that newlyweds made regular bids for each other’s attention. One person would turn to the other and try to engage their spouse. Most of the time, these “bids” were nothing more than a comment on the weather or a potential item for conversation. It was an attempt by one partner to engage with the other. The item of discussion was often unimportant – but the partner’s response turned out to be profound.

The Gottmans determined that couples who were divorced within six years of participating in the study only responded positively to their partner’s “bids” for attention an average of 33 percent of the time. In contrast, couples that maintained happy marriages (over those same six years) responded positively to an average of 87 percent of their partner’s “bids.” The difference between couples who thrived during those first six years of marriage and those who failed was as simple as whether or not they took an honest interest in each other’s lives.

It turns out that, in marriage, the small stuff is vitally important. When one partner asks another, “How was your day?” the answer matters. If you respond with a grunt or curt disinterest, then you are shutting down a bid that your spouse has made to be involved in your life. Your partner probably doesn’t actually care about the inner workings of your place of business. They care about you, and every time you deny them access to being a part of your life you push them away.

One aspect of successful marriages is simply that spouses consistently welcome each other into their lives. They respond positively to each other’s bids for attention. It is a daily process of saying to the person you love, “I am interested in you.”

## Bible Banter

### *Service for Your Dog*

A farmer named Muldoon lived alone in the Irish countryside except for a pet dog he for a long time. The dog finally died and Muldoon went to the parish priest, saying "Father, the dog is dead. Could you possibly be saying a Mass for the poor creature?"

Father Patrick told the farmer "No, we can't have services for an animal in the church, but I'll tell you what, there's a new denomination down the road apiece, and no telling what they believe in, but maybe they'll do something for the animal."

Muldoon said "I'll go right now. By the way, do you think \$50,000 is enough to donate for the service?"

Father Patrick replied "Why didn't you tell me the dog was Catholic."

Provided by: <http://www.ahajokes.com/reg53.html>

## July Anniversary's and Birthday's

2<sup>nd</sup>-Abby White  
4<sup>th</sup>-Alexia Nelson  
8<sup>th</sup>-Jennifer Flemming  
12<sup>th</sup>-Elizabeth Burdine  
14<sup>th</sup>-Carson Mueggenberg  
16<sup>th</sup>-Cal Riedesel  
18<sup>th</sup>-Randy and Jennie Christensen  
Anniversary  
19<sup>th</sup>-Mary Fairchild  
19<sup>th</sup>-Bill Crawford  
19<sup>th</sup>- Bill and Elaine Crawford  
Anniversary  
21<sup>st</sup>-Lindsey Cose  
23<sup>rd</sup>-Pilar Arellano  
31<sup>st</sup>-Lynne Lamp



**June Ushers will be: Ron and Jane Burdine**

**Lectors: July 6 and 27 Loretta Hanson.....July 13 and 20 Jane Burdine**

## Announcements:

\*\*\*Presbyterian Women's luncheon is scheduled for 11:30am, **July 9th** at The Country Club

\*\*\*Session meets on **August 20th** at 7:00pm in the church basement

\*\*\*Bible Study meets at 10:00am in the church basement on the last Wednesday of every month.