

# First Presbyterian Church of Glidden

June 2017

Spring

Near the end of this month, I will go to San Francisco for my annual study leave. I hope to use this time to complete three courses for my Doctor of Ministry in just three weeks. This will involve eight hours a day in the classroom, reading about a dozen books, and completing a dozen more papers. During the two weekends that I will be gone, I expect to do some hiking in the redwoods and catch up with a couple old friends.

Study leave at San Francisco Theological Seminary has always a very busy trip for me (and this year is packed) but I always find that I'm never tired when I get home. Far from wearing me out, study leave is the most invigorating time of the year. Classwork in my program often has less to do with book learning (though there are plenty of books) and more to do with reflection and prayer. They don't want me to walk away a scholar, but a better pastor.

However, I don't think that there's anything particularly special about this Doctor of Ministry program that couldn't be found anywhere else. I think that if anyone were to take two to three weeks to reflect carefully on their life and work, then we'd all walk away from that time with renewed energy and passion. It's not the books that we read in seminary; it's the fact that reading and discussion is life-giving. It's not that prayers in San Francisco are more meaningful; it's the fact that nowhere else am I encourage to spend so much time in the soul-nurturing act of prayer. Study leave is powerful for me because it forces me to do all the good things that I should be doing regularly.

And, right now, I have to ask myself, "Why should I look forward so much to walks in the redwoods, when I can barely be bothered to walk around my own neighborhood? Why treasure summer reading that I have to cram into two to three months, when the rest of the year is full of time to read and think?" It seems that I often avoid the live-giving and soul-nurturing parts of life when I'm not forced to do them. And I don't think I'm alone in this.

Do you ever avoid some of your favorite activities because they take too much effort? When was the last time you had a couple good friends over for dinner? Do you pass up opportunities to garden or play bridge, in order to stay inside and watch TV? Do you wait for your next vacation before you crack open a new book? Do you delay the things that you love for later, simply because they take a little bit more energy to get started?

The truth is that there's nothing magical about vacations or study leave. They just help to redirect our attention to the things we love. It's easier to go for a walk or read a novel when you haven't been working all day. It's easier to spend time with the people you love when you're not so busy all the time.

And if we avoid the activities that we love because we're too tired, then maybe we should take greater opportunities to rest. In the Old Testament, people didn't just celebrate the seventh day with a weekend break. They also celebrated the seventh year, taking a break from farming, and eating whatever the land provided. I suspect that we all need more rest than we know. Create time for rest. Create time for life-giving activities. Don't just wait for the next vacation.

Blessings,  
Pastor Brian

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## Where are they now?

This month we connect with Chris Hofstad who lives at 9146 Azalea Way, Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota 55077. In case any one wishes to contact Chris, he has offered his e-mail at [chris.hofstad@faegrebd.com](mailto:chris.hofstad@faegrebd.com). Chris is the son of Curtis and Carolyn Hofstad who were members of the Presbyterian Church in Glidden. Curtis died in September of 2014 and Carolyn died in April of 2016. Chris was joined in the family with two siblings, Jodi who lives in the Washington, D.C. area while Lance and his wife live in Portland, Oregon.

Chris and Jodi were born in Manhasset, NY. and moved to Glidden as Chris entered first grade. Lance was born in Carroll, Iowa. Chris enjoyed his days in grade school and high school as the school was the right size to know everyone in the system. He recalls attending fourth grade in Ralston and enjoying a trip to the State House in Des Moines as a fifth grader, as well as being class president in his junior year and president of the student body in his senior year. He also recalls being a captain of the football team his senior year. Life was good in Glidden for Chris as this small town put stability in his life and allowed growth to take place as he expanded his world. Chris listed a few of his favorite teachers as being Mr. Barry Brandt, Mr. Bruce Jepson, Mrs. Karen Ploeger, Mr. Jerry Mathine and others he had in grade school.

During our discussion Chris did not bring up this story, but congregation members of the late 1970's remember the story. Chris brought his drum to church and during the church service every few seconds Chris would hit the drum. This went on during the full length of the service. Some members were annoyed. At the end of the service, it was announced that each time the drum sounds a child in the world died of starvation. A meaningful message.



Graduation from high school arrived in 1980 and Chris was off to college at Iowa State University where he studied computer science. He also was a member of the Air Force ROTC program while at Iowa State. His future wife, Susan was also a member of the AF ROTC program and this is where they met. Susan was in ROTC for two years but Chris stayed in during his full time at ISU. Chris and Susan both graduated in 1984 with their undergraduate degrees in computer science and Chris with a commission in the Air Force. Chris and Susan were married in 1984 in Moline, Illinois. Following their marriage Chris began his full time employment in the Air Force with training and eventually flying F-15 jets and RC-135's. Chris flew reconnaissance missions and intelligence missions while stationed overseas. He completed some of his reconnaissance missions during the first gulf war era.

The Hofstad's have three sons, Joseph lives in Chicago and has two sons, Lucas (8) and Nicholas (6). Alex and his wife, Andrea, live in a suburb of Minneapolis and have two daughters, Lydia (4) and Emma (2). Third son Erik lives in the Minneapolis area with his wife, Anna, but they are moving to St. Louis in June of this year. Chris and Susan are most proud of their family and visit them as much as time permits.

Chris was planning on making the Air Force his career but after reaching the rank of Captain that plan changed in the blink of an eye. Chris was to fly a large plane that had been in the shop for repair. The repairs were completed so Chris and the head maintenance person were inspecting the plane. As they inspected they walked under the nose of the plane and just then the nose gear collapsed dropping the plane on Chris and the maintenance supervisor. Chris was literally crushed. He suffered a broken sternum, broken ribs, broken vertebrae, broken bones in his inner ears and broken bones throughout other parts of his head and body. His body was wired together with mesh and screws and two hundred stitches. He was not expected to live but held on and passed the 24 hour test. He was hospitalized for thirty days and later had to return for two – two week

stays. He still suffers from double vision and other effects and for years was medicated for epilepsy. This accident ended a career that has spanned the world as Chris and Susan had moved every two years to a new base within the Air Force. Unable to fly Chris was discharged from what was to be his life's work. The maintenance foreman also survived.

While in the Air Force, Chris attended Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (based out of Daytona Beach, Florida) and received his master's degree in Aeronautics. Upon leaving the Air Force, Chris enrolled at the University of Minnesota and in 1997 he graduated with a law degree, specializing in Corporate Law. While Chris was in law school, Susan was the bread winner as she worked for software companies.

Chris has repositioned himself and began employment with a law firm by the name of Faegre- Baker-Daniels, which employs 800 attorneys. They have offices in Minneapolis, London, Beijing, Chicago, Los Angeles and other larger cities throughout the world. Chris is now head of this firm's Corporate Group, which includes over 200 attorneys and other professionals. Chris does a lot of traveling as he oversees this vast array of offices. As a Corporate attorney, Chris has worked in the mergers and acquisitions (M&A) area with such firms as Pella Corp., Target Corp., Cargill, Minnesota Vikings and other well-known companies. During the 2008 Republican National Convention held in St. Paul, Minnesota, Chris led most of the legal work for the venues that acted as primary host to the many delegates and guests.

Chris gives great credit to his parents as he points out that Mom raised us kids as Dad was away on travel, as part of his job, much of the time. Dad instilled in Chris the need for perseverance, which came in handy as Chris laid in a hospital bed.

Chris speaks fondly about the First Presbyterian Church where he grew up. It taught him life's values. It has given him a strong Christian value as a foundation to his life. He speaks well of Rev. Scott Burkley and the youth group leaders, Marlys and Mark Conner. Speaking of Rev. Scott Burkley, now you know where the idea for the drum beat originated. Chris points out that there are no atheists in a military fox hole and so it was with him in his military experience. His healing was part Dr. Performance and much divine intervention. He is grateful for the church and the caring people of Glidden, Iowa.

He loved the Air Force and his days of flying. Today he still flies doing his job and vacationing with Susan, he just can't sit in the Captain's seat.

After a 55 minute telephone conversation, we ended our visit with the recall of many precious memories. We thank Chris and wish he and Susan God's speed as they face the next ten years working as a corporate lawyer and then retiring as they recall the memories of their life.

## June Birthdays and Anniversaries

-3<sup>rd</sup>-Diane Thelin

-3<sup>rd</sup>-Brad & Heather Mueggenberg  
Anniversary

-11<sup>th</sup>-Keith & Suzy Danner Anniversary

-15<sup>th</sup>-Matt & Rhonda Conner  
Anniversary

-19<sup>th</sup>-Rick & Tami Burdine Anniversary

-20<sup>th</sup>-Russ Draves

-24<sup>th</sup>-Duane and Joyce Conner  
Anniversary

-29<sup>th</sup>-Madison Christensen



## Quotes of the Month

“Remember, it is not your weakness that will get in the way of God’s working through you, but your delusions of strength. His strength is made perfect in our weakness! Point to His strength by being willing to admit your weakness.” ~ Paul David Tripp, Pastor

Read more: <http://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/top-25-christian-quotes-about-strength/#ixzz4isf5Fj00>

## *Kudos Korner:*

*\*To Pastor Brian and Abby Stoner on their recent engagement.*

*\*To the Building & Grounds Committee for their continuous work on improving the church building.*

*\*To the Parish Life Committee for preparation and hosting the reception for young people who were baptized and high school graduates.*

*\*To our senior graduates, Brandon Burdine, Cole Burdine and Julia Fleecs. Excellent accomplishments. Brandon will be attending Iowa State University, Cole will be attending Des Moines Area Community College in Ankeny, while Julia will be attending the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks, N.D.*

*\*To Larry Littlefield upon his retirement from teaching after 41 years of service of which 37 years were spent in the Glidden-Ralston system.*

*\*To Dean Lamp who is retiring from his part-time position at Glidden-Ralston school system. Earlier Dean had retired from his full time position.*

*\*To Julia Fleecs on her selection as valedictorian of the graduating class of 2017. AND for being recognized at the Fifteenth Annual Governor’s Recognition Ceremony for her outstanding academic achievement.*

*\*To Brandon Burdine on receiving the first Ed Walkup scholarship award.*

*\*To all the fathers in our congregation for your hard work and compassion. Have a Happy Father’s Day!*

## Bible Banter

A couple had two little boys, ages 8 and 10, who were excessively mischievous. The two were always getting into trouble and their parents could be assured that if any mischief occurred in their town their two young sons were in some way involved.

The parents were at their wits end as to what to do about their sons' behavior. The mother had heard that a clergyman in town had been successful in disciplining children in the past, so she asked her husband if he thought they should send the boys to the speak with the clergyman.

The husband said, "We might as well. We need to do something before I really lose my temper!" The clergyman agreed to speak with the boys, but asked to see them individually. The 8 year old went to meet with him first. The clergyman sat the boy down and asked him sternly, "Where is God?"

The boy made no response, so the clergyman repeated the question in an even sterner tone, "Where is God?" Again the boy made no attempt to answer. So the clergyman raised his voice even more and shook his finger in the boy's face, "Where is God?"

At that the boy bolted from the room and ran directly home, slamming himself in the closet. His older brother followed him into the closet and asked what had happened. The younger brother replied, "We are in BIG trouble this time. God is missing and they think we did it!"

## Announcements

\*Church times are changing for the summer!

From June 4<sup>th</sup> to August 27<sup>th</sup> Sunday morning worship will begin at 9:00am

\*PW meets on Wednesday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, at 11:30 am at Charlies in Carroll

\*Session meets on Wednesday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30pm

\*Pastor Brian will be on Study Leave from June 19<sup>th</sup> to July 7<sup>th</sup>

Worship on June 25<sup>th</sup> and July 2<sup>nd</sup> will be at the United Methodist Church at 10:30am

If you have any pictures of old homes in Glidden, please bring them to the church so that we can make copies, in order to decorate for the Tour of Homes.

The Mission Emphasis for the months of May and June is Heifer International.

Heifer International seeks to bring sustainable agriculture to the poorest parts of the world. They begin by donating to a community or a family the gift of an animal, like a heifer or goat or a small flock of chickens. Those animals provide families with both a source of food and a reliable income. This small addition of food and income can transform the lives of a needy family. They then pay the gift forward by passing on the first female offspring to another family in need. Heifer International has received numerous awards, including a World Food Prize and the Presidential End Hunger Award. They have partnered with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and are regularly audited by charity watchdog groups. We believe that this will be a wonderful ministry for us to support this summer.