

Alumni Spotlight: Patrick I. Lowthian (MDiv '01)



Current Title & Military Branch: Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel); Command Chaplain, 7th Army Training Command, Tower Barracks, Grafenwoehr, Germany; US Army

Family: Married to Marcy since January 3, 1998; Three Daughters: Olivia, Amelia, and Clara

Favorite professors: Dr. Haddon Robinson and Dr. Scott Gibson

Favorite memory: Fellowship and laughing with friends in Pilgrim Hall and C Building.

What have you been doing since you left Gordon-Conwell and what are you doing now?

Immediately after Gordon-Conwell, I served as the solo pastor of a church in Crestline, CA for four years. I joined the Army Reserve during that time. I became an Active Duty Chaplain in September 2005, so I am in my eighteenth year since coming on active duty. I have been stationed at numerous locations, including Fort Carson, CO; Fort Bragg, NC; Fort Meade, MD; Fort Jackson, SC; Fort Shafter and Schofield Barracks, HI; Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA; Fort Leavenworth, KS; and now Germany.

In my current job I oversee training for all US Army chaplains in Europe, and I collaborate with other chaplaincies in NATO for training.

What do you love about your work as a military chaplain?

I love being able to mentor and guide younger chaplains as they learn this unique ministry. I love spending time with soldiers, helping them walk with Christ. In my early years during combat deployments, it was an honor to serve with and support young men serving our country in a time of war.

What are the particular challenges of serving as a military chaplain in general and/or in your specific context?

There is a temptation to just be another secular counselor. I want to resist that temptation and remain true to Christ; to not hedge on introducing others to Him and communicating that He is the Savior of the world, not secular ideas about how to live a better life.

How has God woven together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now? How did you come to be doing your current work?

I was a student worker in the admissions office at Gordon-Conwell when a DMin student asked me where he could get a haircut. He was a Navy Reserve Chaplain named Bob Phaneuf, who pastored in Rhode Island. We talked about chaplaincy, but I didn't bite. A few years later God revived that calling, and I joined the Army.



What has been Gordon-Conwell's biggest impact/influence on the work you do now or the way you do your work?

Gordon-Conwell's commitment to the Bible, solid exegesis, and devotion to Christ was a buttress to me during my time there. In addition, the practical and simply preaching methodology of Dr. Haddon Robinson shaped me, and it translates well to the multitude of preaching settings I have found myself in during my years as a chaplain.

What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are considering serving as a military chaplain?

Stay close to Jesus. Do not lose your love for him, and do not forget his love for you. Pastoring, chaplaincy, ministry—they can be hard and lonely. Stay close to Jesus.