

Christian Testimony IV: Call from the Army and the Call to PCA

Upon returning from Afghanistan in 2016, we moved to the Colonial Tidewater area of Virginia (Williamsburg, Yorktown area) where I have been working on how the Army will operate and fight in the future. Intellectually, this has been both the most challenging and rewarding time of my career, tapping into multiple unique experiences and skills I had developed in the previous twenty-five years. This has also been the season where we transitioned our boys, then 16 and 13, from homeschooling into private Christian school. I also rediscovered the challenges of coming off a long deployment, and I was so thankful that the Lord provided a great church and a men's ministry/small group that walked with me in this season.

In the Spring of 2018, I knew I had to get serious about exploring opportunities outside the Army, as my three-year tour would come to a close the following summer. Furthermore, I only had two years of service remaining (colonels must retire at 30 years). The looming potential of another move, coupled with our youngest son's remaining years in high school, meant we needed to start looking sooner rather than later for what the Lord was calling me to next. Prayerfully I began exploring options, primarily in our local region. During that search I found the posting for the PCA job on a Christian educational job board. As Christy and I prayerfully reviewed the qualifications and job description, we felt a strong pull in both directions. In one direction, we really liked where we lived currently, had a wonderful church and community we were connecting with, and frankly hoped to find something in our current area for me. But we also sensed the Lord might be opening a door to service, ministry, and leadership through PCA. In faith, I applied, and in the application journey through the summer and fall of 2018 discerned the call to PCA more strongly and clearly. Several mentors encouraged us to pursue the Lord while also counting the costs, accurately assessing what is going on at the school, and plumbing the true depths of this calling. Like many worthy endeavors, this seeking and confirmation of calling took many small steps over time. In the end, the call became clear for our entire family—a call we are pleased to answer.

Since late last autumn, when the PCA Board presented the call to me to be PCA's next Head of School, we have joyfully prepared ourselves for this next step in our journey. In many ways, coming to PCA is a step of faith. I have never lived a day outside of the Army—I grew up an Army brat, went to West Point, and have served in uniform for 28 years. Coming to the Seacoast will be my 30th move in my lifetime, fifteen of which I share with Christy since we graduated West Point together. Frankly, a few years ago I asked the Lord if we can settle for a bit: grow a garden, commit to a church and community without the reality of a pending move always around the corner. We had imagined our move to Virginia in 2016 was a move for ultimate stability, at least for about ten years. Still, I think He smiled as He gently reminded me that the foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, and that He will always provide what we need when we follow His call. He called us again to trust Him and step in faith. Then, He continued to introduce us to the amazing people of PCA: the parents, the kids, the faculty members, the support staff, the volunteers, the friends. We see and hear their love for God and their vision for Christian education in the Seacoast region. And I smiled—we all smiled--sensing the Lord had already prepared the work for me and my family to partake with you in (Ephesians 2:10). And that truth brings me great joy and confidence to make this new step of faith, outside of the military, to join with a new community on an important mission.

As we prepare to move from coastal Virginia to coastal New England, we are both hopeful and prayerful. Like you, our hope is our family—our children—would continue to seek and follow God faithfully, that they would know His joy in the midst of life changes and challenges, and they would follow Him faithfully and obediently in service to others. We are prayerful for new community, to become part of a church family we have not yet met. Based on God's word and His faithfulness through our lives, we make the next step to PCA with confidence, joy, and determination. I look forward to joining you in the good work of raising our children to grow spiritually, academically, and relationally and fulfill their God-given potential for the flourishing of their own families, churches, and communities—in the Seacoast and to the uttermost reaches of the earth, all to God's glory.