

## Dave Brogden's Spiritual Journey

*Dave has served as an Elder since 1980. His hometown is Ransomville, New York. He and his wife, Susan, moved to Harrison from South Hadley, Massachusetts in December of 1977. In the course of church shopping, they first attended First Christian in January of 1978 and joined in May of 1978. Dave and Susan have two daughters, Elizabeth and Anne. A chemical engineer by degree, Dave has done business planning and scheduling for the past several years at Lanxess-Lustran Polymers Corporation (formerly Monsanto/Bayer) in Addyston. He loves cycling and also enjoys weightlifting, hiking, and watching sports (especially college basketball). He has served in many ministries through the years including two terms as Chair of the Board and is currently a Care Team member and has refereed in the Upward ministry. Favorite Scripture: I Corinthians 13.*



My name is Dave Brogden, and my spiritual journey began at birth. I was born in Niagara Falls, New York, and grew up in the little town of Ransomville, New York. My parents were raised in southern Alabama and they were Baptists. In Ransomville, the Baptist church was just around the corner from our house. Every Sunday, my parents, my older sister, and I put on our Sunday best (which included a clip-on tie for me) and walked to church. My dad was a shift worker and wasn't always able to attend, but he was a deacon, lawn mower, and fix-it man for the church. Mom sang in the choir, prepared the quarterly communion, and taught Sunday School. I'm not sure what the consequence of refusing to attend church would have been because I never bucked the system. If I got out of line during worship (which, of course, was rare), my mother would give me a hard pinch on my thigh. It hurt and I behaved! My parents died five years ago. I'm still very thankful to them for guiding me to the Lord.

Ministers were very important in my life. I respected them and sought their opinions on many occasions. I was active in the Baptist Youth Fellowship (BYF) as a teen. When I was an 8th grader, I took an interest inventory at school to see what types of careers my interests might lead me to. "Minister" was high on my list of potential careers. I guess you could say I've been running from that result for about 40 years now!

I attended college at Purdue University. During my first two years there, I didn't attend worship services, but I began to attend the Federated Church in West Lafayette occasionally during my junior year. That was the year I met Susan, and by the time I was a senior, Susan and I were dating steadily and attending the Federated Church together. Susan had grown up in a Disciples congregation, and coincidentally, the Federated Church was a blending of the Disciples of Christ and Baptists.

I moved to Massachusetts and an engineering job with Monsanto following my graduation from Purdue in 1974. Susan and I married in July of 1975. One of the first things we did as a couple was find a church, the First Congregational Church in South Hadley, Massachusetts. With two other couples, we led the high school youth group, and that was the first time in my life that I really felt I was having an impact on others for Christ. It was a great group of young people, and we had meaningful discussions on many subjects. We still stay in contact with one of the girls (she's 45 years old now). She lives in New Zealand with her husband and children.

We moved to Harrison in December of 1977 and sought a church immediately. We settled on First Christian because of its friendliness and its minister, Tim Mabbott. A lot of memories come back to me as I write this; being greeted at the door each Sunday by Fred Kendrick and Frank Gulley is one. I was humbled when Fred asked me to be an Elder. There's been a lot of fellowship, including the church softball team, where old guys like me (I was twenty-something) hooked up with teenagers like Kirk Gutzwiller to play a game we enjoyed. We had a church basketball team in the mid-80s, which was great fun for me, and from which many of us still have nagging injuries. There have also been many spiritual experiences, including thought-provoking Sunday School discussions, the Taking the Name of Jesus campaign, and now our Life Groups. I was on a pulpit committee to select one of our ministers, Greg Timmons, and that was a great learning experience. I'm in my second stint as Board chair. Susan and I have learned that you can tithe and still have more than enough money to pay the bills.

I guess I could say that not much has changed in my life. I still go to church every Sunday, but now I drive instead of walk. I still wear a tie to church, but it's a real one instead of a clip-on. The lady sitting beside me still puts her hand on my thigh occasionally but she doesn't pinch me. I still love Jesus Christ, but I have a much deeper and stronger relationship with him, and it is still growing each day.