



Glorifying God, Serving Airmen, Pursuing Excellence

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Fathers and Brothers,

Greetings from the Hurlburt Field chapel and Air Forces Special Operations Command. The last year has been an absolute blur. We left our ministry in England, at RAF Mildenhall, and arrived at our new station here at Hurlburt Field in June of 2018. It's been a joy to come back to the US, and we were thrilled that our new assignment was Hurlburt Field for two reasons. First, on a personal note, we were back on the Emerald Coast! We served from 2012-2015 at Eglin Air Force Base which is only a few miles from Hurlburt. We were able to immediately get (re-)plugged into the community here, and are renting a house just two streets over from the home we had in 2012-2015. We have been able to get quickly plugged back into the local Church, First Presbyterian Church in Niceville, led by Joe Grider and reestablish old friendships. Second, on a vocational note, we were humbled by the opportunity to minister to the Air Force Special Forces community.

God's blessing left England with us and God's blessing met us here in Florida. As I was headed out the door from England, I found out that I had been selected as the Edwin R. Chess, Chaplain, Company Grade Officer of the Year of our Major Command, United States Air Forces in Europe and Africa. It was a tremendous privilege and highlights God's grace in granting me favor with both Air Force and Chapel leadership. Then, upon arriving at Hurlburt Field, I was notified that I would be the Chaplain for the Operations Group. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest Operations Group in the Air Force consisting of 1,586 military and civilian personnel. The opportunity to care for these "Air Commandos" and their families is an incredible honor, as they sustain an uninterrupted 15%-35% deployment status in 14+ locations. This base has literally been "deployed at war" for 18 years running with no break.

I was notified in early January that I would be "short-notice" deployed to Afghanistan, and was at Bagram Air Force Base two weeks later! The ministry was amazing! The Lord opened doors of ministry that I would have never imagined possible. I led three daily Bible Studies: one at our Special Tactics Squadron operations center, one at our Maintenance Hangar, and one at our Joint Headquarters building. The best way to summarize God's work there is to share a snippet from the citation that accompanied my Joint Commendation Medal, "While undermanned due to his Religious Support Team's (RST) Chaplain Assistant position being gapped, Captain Wright skillfully and superbly managed a bustling religious support office providing around-the-clock care for both day and night shift personnel. Captain Wright improved morale by coordinating, collecting, and dispersing 3,600 pounds of donated items valued at

\$4,500 to CJSOAC-A members at the headquarters, leading to 18,400 office visits, as well as delivering needed supplies to the maintenance hangar and the Expeditionary Special Tactics compound. He performed or provided 50 religious services serving 772 attendees across the command ensuring that all spiritual needs were met. Captain Wright's non-stop 'Ministry of Presence' led a CJSOAC-A spiritual fitness revival as he prepared and delivered 220 spiritually inspiring command briefs, directly improving morale and resiliency for over 2,000 joint force warriors on a daily basis. In addition, Captain Wright pioneered innovative and squadron-specific spiritual warrior study groups consisting of 104 sessions impacting 360 commandos." God was so good and so gracious. Please pray that God will reap a bountiful harvest for the glory of His name from the seeds that were planted there in the desert.

Pray also for the family. Summer is doing great and has been busy re-connecting with old friends. She is homeschooling Murray, serving in our Church's AWANA program, and helping with the Youth Group. Grady (18), Owen (16), and Murray (10) are having a blast! They are all involved in a many of activities and ministries. Grady and Owen just returned from RYM down the road at Panama City where they had an absolute blast. Grady and Owen's team won the basketball championship and Owen came in 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Mario Kart game tournament! They love being back at the beach and go to Destin every weekend. We just bought Grady his first car (pray for all those on the road in Niceville!), and we'll be buying Owen his first car in two weeks. Murray is on the summer swim team and is making lots of friends and getting in some great exercise. This is a sweet season of life and ministry for the family and we give Christ Jesus every stitch of praise for it!

This being the case, I would like to officially request from the fathers and brothers of Mississippi Valley Presbytery their permission to continue to labor out of bounds for another year.

For Covenant and the Crown,

Joey, Summer, Grady, Owen, and Murray