

Exploring Providence Part 2: Leadership & Ministries

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- [0 : 00] Let's talk decision-making and polity. How is this church led? So Chris, who preached today, you guys generally know, he's our senior pastor.
- ! And he chairs a plurality composed of another Sovereign Grace ordained pastor. So I'm already ordained by Sovereign Grace as a pastor. And then we have a group of ruling elders as well.
- So Chris and I are the teaching elders within the church. We have three ruling elders. So Noah Larson, Noah Maher, John Hegarty are three ruling elders within the church.
- And we all sit as a province leadership team, a plurality of elders working towards caring for, building up, serving this church. And, yeah, so any questions on that?
- All right. All right. The church facility. Just so you guys know, I'm not going to take you on a tour of it today. And we are going to be starting to meet in the gym for a few months, a couple months, as we, God willing, expand this sanctuary, knock out this wall and expand so we can fit a few more seats in the room.
- [1 : 16] Again, so that people can hear the gospel and hear God's word and be built up and experience the fellowship. But in terms of our facility, we have the sanctuary in here.
- We have the children's ministry wing. In fact, I think we're all probably familiar with that. We've got, you know, where the bathrooms are. And then the gym. And there's a fireside room in the gym where we'll do child care while we're meeting in the gym.
- And like Chris said, we'll start meeting in the gym in like two weeks. So not Mother's Day, but the week after Mother's Day. We'll start meeting in there. All right. So church staff and leadership, like I referenced before, Chris is our senior pastor.
- He's been here, I believe, about eight years or so. And he's been a pastor for 25 years, I think, 25, 30 years as a pastor.
- And then I was ordained back in July. I'll give you my story a little bit. So I came from South Jersey where I was a member of Sovereign Grace Marlton for about 20 years, starting in my college years.
- [2 : 21] And then when we moved out to Kansas City five years ago, came here. One of the things that checked the boxes for us to move out to Kansas City, in addition to a job relocation, was the fact that there was a Sovereign Grace church out here.
- We really felt passionate that we felt we would come to a good gospel-centered, complementarian, reformed continuationist, Bible-believing church.
- So we came out here. Within a few years, a number of the guys were going through what Chris affectionately termed a theological leaders program.
- We were basically reading the ordination requirements for Sovereign Grace churches. So I read a whole lot, wrote six papers, took a Bible knowledge exam, took two written theology exams, passed an oral exam, and then I was ordained back in July.

So it's rigorous to become a Sovereign Grace ordained pastor, just so you can feel comfortable with that, the teaching that you're getting.

[3 : 24] And Chris passed through the ordination process, I passed through the ordination process, and anyone who preaches at this pulpit will have gone through a rigorous examination period and training and all those things.

So I think you can feel comfortable with the teaching that you're getting here. All right. So that's our church staff and leadership. And then let's move on to church ministries and activities.

Church ministries and activities. So if you haven't been invited to a community group yet, let me be the first to invite you to come out to a community group. Community groups are great small group opportunities to serve and to be served, to care for people and to be cared for, to be built up in the word.

So we have about five or six community groups right now. We're transitioning some community leadership come the fall, where we'll have five community groups starting in the fall.

They generally meet on Wednesday nights. Some meet men and women together. Some alternate men and ladies, depending on what will serve the group. And so they generally meet the first and third Wednesdays of each month.

[4 : 44] And if you haven't gotten involved with the community group, strongly encourage you. We'll talk about kind of expectations of a member a little bit later, but strongly encourage you guys to get involved in a small group. It's a way to be known and to know other people and to serve and be served and all those things.

That's community groups. And then we have men's ministry. We are, and we'll talk about this, we really at Providence value and care about and stress our men's and women's ministries.

And we love to invest in our men and our women. So we've got men's ministry. So we have fourth Wednesday nights. So community groups meet first and third.

The fourth Wednesday night of each month is a men's ministry. And then we also have these discipleship huddles. So let me back up. So the men's ministry on fourth Wednesday of each month, we're currently going through the eldership requirements outlined in 1 Timothy.

And so we're going through that because we believe that those eldership requirements are very, very helpful for just describing what a godly man looks like.

[5 : 55] We want to be, and we'll talk about this, we want to be a leadership factory. We're building up godly men. And so we're going through those eldership requirements just to educate ourselves on them and what does a godly man look like?

How can we grow into that? How can we aspire for that? How can we have ambition for that? And if God raises up more elders for the church, that's great.

We want to grow men to be leading themselves, to be leading their wives, to be leading their families, and to be leading within ministry within the church and at work, in the community, wherever.

And we believe that those qualifications, eldership qualifications are great things to strive for, for an ambition for and to desire and to build. So we're doing that on Fourth Wednesday nights. The movie Discipleship Huddles, which if you think about it, you think about like a sermon, it's kind of like driving the golf ball from the putting or from the driving ring or from the tee to the fairway, right?

Community groups, it kind of drives the ball from the fairway to the green, putting green. Discipleship Huddles are a great way to get the ball in the hole.

[7 : 11] In terms of like, you can do so much personal application in a sermon, but you can do a decent amount more in a community group where you can really open up and talk within discussion.

And then it's a subject huddle where you don't have, you know, 150, 200 people that are hearing the sermon, and a community group where you don't have 15, 20 people, but a subject huddle where you have two or three or five people in a huddle talking about, you know, what does the word say?

How do I apply this word to my life? What are some goals I can set for my life? Hold me accountable? Things like that. So we really believe in Discipleship Huddles. We have them for men right now, and we're planning to start them for ladies in the fall.

So more to come there. But if you're part of a community group, like, and you want fellowship, just initiate it. Just, we really believe in, and we'll talk about that, we really believe in initiative, take responsibility, taking ownership for your growth and sanctification and walk with the Lord.

So if you want to do a huddle, you don't have to wait until August to start a huddle. You can start a huddle now. Talk to an elder, talk to a community group leader, think of a good book that you could read together or a book of the Bible or whatever, and just get involved and pursue, aggressively pursue your sanctification, and huddles help you to do that.

[8 : 42] And then also, we have fire pit nights, like, once a month or so, where we get the guys together, and we'll just, we'll fellowship together around a fire pit. We'll have, you know, good fellowship, usually around 10 o'clock at night.

We'll initiate a conversation, usually something that can help men to lead and follow Christ as men. So we'll talk about things like that.

And it's just, it's a great way to get to know other guys and have conversations. So we do fire pit nights as well as part of our men's ministry, among other things. And then women's ministry, we have Bible studies.

As you learned about this morning, we have a fellowship night tomorrow, tomorrow night. So there's ladies' fellowship nights. There's a mom university in January, February time frame, where it's like, it's cold and somewhat gray in the wintertime.

So let's get you out on like a Friday morning and get you some food, get you some fellowship, hear a good talk, maybe some other ladies. So that's mom university. That happens in January to February time frame.

[9 : 53] So women's, we've got Bible studies, we've got fellowship nights, we've got mom university, we have a book study going on. Right now they're reading a C.S. Lewis book. So it's just a lot of opportunity for fellowship as ladies as well.

And then outreach opportunities. We do believe that, as Chris talked about today, that God, that Christ has saved us to send us to our families, to our community and beyond.

So we do believe in evangelism and sharing Christ with the community. So we have a Johnson County community college outreach that goes onto the campus of Johnson County once a month.

And we just, we put up a whiteboard. It's pretty cool. We put a whiteboard and we put a question on there like, is church a good thing? Or should we celebrate Christmas?

Just questions like that. That would just get people thinking and talking. And so we go out on the campus, we hand out more than a carpenter books. We hand out invites to our church.

[10 : 59] And we're just there to serve the students of Johnson County. So we do that. We had an Easter egg hunt a couple weeks ago, a couple weeks ago for around Easter time.

I mean, last Saturday, I was in track of time. But we had an Easter egg hunt. And then we also do something called Make, Bake, or Buy, which once a year we get the ladies together and you bring five things that you made or bake or bought.

And you can just swap them and have a good time doing that. So there's a variety of ways or opportunities that you can reach out. So there's a good opportunity to invite and bring along guests to the events.

So it's just a lot of outreach opportunities. And even right now, we're thinking through evangelism as a church and specifically as an evangelism team, the Johnson County Community College Outreach Team.

We have about 20 people in a base camp group. And probably about seven or eight of us have gone out to Johnson County and shared the gospel there with the community there.

[12 : 00] Over the summer, we're going to be reading through a book called The Insider, which is all about how do you share Christ in your circles of influence. It's a quick, pretty accessible book.

It's not 750 pages. It's got theology and then it's got application. So we're reading through that together, just thinking about how we can share the gospel with people.

And so that's primarily going to be through our base camp group. We'll talk about base camp in a little bit. If you're not on base camp yet, it's a great way to find out what's going on with the church and just communicate.

If you need prayer requests, anything, it can be a lot of notifications. So I can work with you to set up the notifications so they're not overwhelming. You'll get like a thousand emails a day, but you can turn that feature off and just have regular app notifications.

We can talk about that. But all that to be said, that we're running through our outreach adventures and team through the base camp group. Go from there. All right. Real quick, I wanted to give a little bit more focus on Southern Grace Churches.

[13 : 06] Just make sure you know our relationship with Southern Grace Churches. Southern Grace Churches' mission is, to plant and strengthen churches for the glory of God. So we are a Southern Grace Church.

We have a statement of faith, which you'll have. Seven shared values, which I went over. The first thing we went over after Truth and Beauty and Community was seven shared values of Southern Grace Churches. There are seven shaping virtues that we as part of Southern Grace Churches believe that a gospel-centered culture will produce.

So we believe that a gospel-centered culture will produce humility. will produce joy. Will produce gratitude. Will produce encouragement, generosity, servanthood, and godliness.

So we believe that a gospel-centered culture will produce those seven shared values, or seven shaping virtues, sorry. And so those are some of the virtues that we want to cultivate within our church.

And you'll see, we'll talk about them more as time goes on. You'll see us reference them a bit through the podcast or on Basecamp. But those are the seven shaping virtues of Southern Grace Churches that we believe, again, that a gospel-centered culture will produce.

[14 : 24] And then in terms of governance, like I mentioned before, we're part of a regional structure of governance within Southern Grace Churches. We're part of the Midwest-Northwest region. That region oversees ordination.

The region oversees church planting. And the region oversees adjudication. So ordination. If you are interested in pursuing eldership within Southern Grace Churches, there's a guy who sits in Sioux Falls.

He oversees the ordination committee. And there's a committee. And he will help you walk you through the process of pursuing ordination within the Midwest-Northwest region, within Southern Grace Churches in general.

And we can talk more about that, if that's of interest. Yeah. You have a question? Yeah. Yeah, sure. So you can go to the pastor's college, or you can do it you can do it self-taught, self-directed, but under the supervision of the ordination committee.

But there is a pastor's college, for sure. Okay. I was just trying to see what that is. Yeah, we'll talk offline. But Southern Grace Churches has a pastor's college in Louisville, Kentucky that you can go.

[15 : 37] It's an immersive experience for like 10 months where you live within the Louisville church and you get taught by really fine, excellent teachers. But then you can also pursue ordination through reading basically everything they would read at the pastor's college or a lot of what they read at the pastor's college, pass the test and get ordained that way.

So there's a couple different paths you can take. Church planning. So Chris, our senior pastor, is the chair of the church planning committee for our region.

So we're always looking to see is God providing church planners? Is he raising up men that could plant churches? And couples, really. Men and, you know, married couples or single guys or whoever that could go and plant a church.

Is he, is God providing a team of people? Is God providing a place that'd be good to plant a church? Because in Southern Grace Churches, we believe in the team approach to planting.

So sometimes a church will start out with one elder, but we want to surround them with three or four or five godly couples that can come in and support and help out. Not just send out a guy to go and plant a church and do it on his own.

[16 : 50] We believe in team ministry in that way. So Chris, every church planning for the region and then adjudication if anything happens in the church that we can't solve here within the eldership structure.

If there's a complaint or an accusation that bears weight, that can be brought to the region and the region can help serve with that as well. And then nationally, there's a national leadership team.

There's a theology team that helps basically draft the statement of faith and oversee the theology of Southern Grace Churches. There's an international church planting team. So Southern Grace Churches is growing internationally as well as domestically.

There's a church planting team for that. And then there's a sexual misconduct team which is helps empower, helps equip the elders of a church and a church community to make sure that our children are protected.

Our children are protected as really as the dear children that they are that we want anything to happen to them throughout the context of a local church. So if you're teaching a children's ministry here at our church, you have to go through ministry safe training and go through background check and things like that.

[18 : 08] That's all things guidance that we're getting that we believe that we should do and then also we've gotten guidance from Southern Grace Churches Central with help and guidance for how to protect our children really well.

So, all right. So that's Southern Grace Churches. Let me stop for a second. We've gone through a few things over the past couple minutes. Any questions or anything you want to stop me on? Yeah.