

Alumni Spotlight: Chris Blackey (MDiv '09)



Current title: Co-Pastor of the First Baptist Church of South Londonderry, VT

Family: Married with three kids: Sarah (12), Daniel (10), Priscilla (5)

Favorite professor: Dr. Arthurs

Favorite class: Pastoral Ministry

Favorite memory: Making pancakes with our Soul Care group, which consisted of three couples, one Saturday morning in Bell sharing about our calls to ministry.

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

My wife and I have served our church, First Baptist Church of South Londonderry, VT, since February 2010. I became a volunteer firefighter after our building burned in August of 2010. I have also been able to start a YouTube channel as a local weather reporter for Southern Vermont, which has been fun as my undergraduate degree was in Meteorology.

What do you love about your work? What are the particular joys and challenges of serving a rural church?

I love that I have planned funerals while helping in a local sugar house. I love that I have had many “pastoral” meetings while riding a ski chair lift. I love that every trip to the local grocery store is office hours. Being intimately connected with a small community is also a challenge. There is much work to do and limited volunteers with time to help. Rebuilding a church building in a rural location is complicated with current building codes. Navigating family relationships that go back generations can be complex. Mostly though, I love that our life as a family is ministry—that it feels like the work God calls us to is truly incarnational in that most of our testimony to our community is about trying to live authentically as followers of Jesus.



How has God woven together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now?

Gordon-Conwell cemented my sense of call to pastoral ministry, particularly my call to pastoral ministry in Northern New England where I am currently serving. Before attending seminary, I felt a distinct call to pastor in Northern New England, but Gordon-Conwell helped me discern that my call was to serve towards renewal in an established congregation.

How has your Gordon-Conwell education served you in your past and current work?

Pastoring in a rural setting often leaves limited time for study and sermon preparation. The blessing of more than three years of time dedicated to building a deep base of biblical knowledge has been a true blessing. Also, as a person who grew up in a rural New England Baptist congregation, the exposure Gordon-Conwell gave me to some of the variety in the Body of Christ has been invaluable. It has allowed me to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of my tradition and through the grace of God allowed some of that understanding to be woven into the culture of our Church.

What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are just entering pastoral ministry?

Pray about your calling and listen to the voices of mentors around you considering your calling. My time at Gordon-Conwell was really a time of discerning that God was calling Kathleen and I in many ways as missionaries. However, we also had a strong sense we were not called to cross-cultural ministry. Northern rural New England was what both of us knew. We knew from growing up here that there was desperate need for the gospel to be shared in the towns and cities of Northern New England, and that while we would be called to serve a church that is more than 200 years old, for many in our community when they encounter the gospel through our church it is as if it is being told to them for the first time.



Do you have any publications or links to share?

Here is the church that I serve: www.firstbaptistslondonderryvt.org

If you are interested in weather forecasts for Southern Vermont :)
www.youtube.com/channel/UC5sGM-e3Vh0xo3m6m7FUVPw/featured