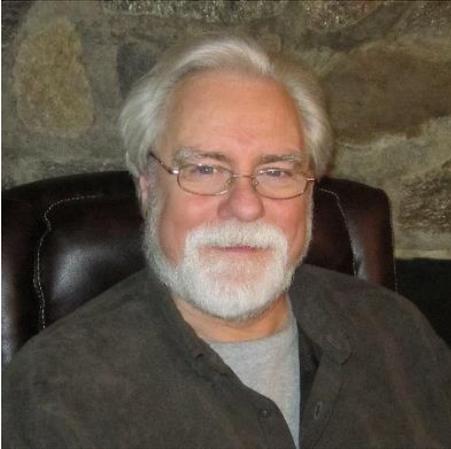


Alumni Spotlight: Moe Cormier (MDiv '09)



Current Title: Pastor, Loudon Congregational Church, Loudon NH

Family: Married to wife, Jennifer for 26 years and counting!

Favorite Professors: Gary Parrett, Sean McDonough, and Moonjang Lee have most influenced my daily ministry here.

Favorite Class: Mentored Ministry was not only a joy, but arguably the most relevant to my day-to-day ministry. I was blessed to have a mentor who treated me more like an assistant pastor and allowed me access to every aspect of his ministry, rather than simply bringing me on in one single capacity and then pigeon-holing me.

Favorite Memory: Our earliest favorite memory was moving onto campus on our 10th anniversary! We were

invited to play volleyball (my wife's favorite) that first night. This was the first of innumerable ways God confirmed that coming to Gordon-Conwell was His will and not merely my own!

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

After graduation I served Christ Community Church, in Blackstone MA, for three years. Both the church leadership and I mutually discerned that God was leading us in different directions, and we parted amicably. Since 2014 I've been here at Loudon Congregational and am now the second-longest serving pastor in the history of "The Village Church"! One of my great passions is following the Holy Spirit as He knits the greater Body of Christ back together for more effective Kingdom work. I've also spent much time studying and teaching the vital nature of persevering prayer for church health, as well as the return and growth of divine healing ministries in 21st century "mainline" churches.



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

Three joys are: 1) The people! 2) the people!! and 3) the people!!! They're at all ages and all levels of biblical understanding – and these saints are hungry to really dig deeply in the Word! A small-town pastor gets a ringside seat to watch the flock grow in their faith! You really get to know them (and they you) in ways that just aren't feasible in a larger, more populated setting. Of course, this means they also see your flaws "up close", as well.



As the pastor of a rural church, I have also gotten to know our community leaders in a personal way. I know the police and fire chiefs, and they know me, as do many under their commands. The same goes for the members of the school board, the school principal, the road agent, and the folks at the transfer station.

A rural pastor is more likely to need to know how to fix a leaky faucet as well as fix a broken soul than a pastor in other settings! Pastors of rural congregations often don't have a full team on whom to lean – in a single week he or she may not only compose a sermon and lead a Bible study and/or a prayer group, but also gather the mail, answer the phone, install a new thermostat, update the website, choose the music, meet with service providers, and visit the sick and the dying. Many rural congregations are on very shaky financial ground, forcing one to lean heavily on God's provision for *everything*, and provide He does!

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

I came to Gordon-Conwell as a second career student. My upbringing was also not exactly in what many people would consider a Christian home, nor did I go to Bible college for my undergraduate degree. Gordon-Conwell helped me to take those "real world" experiences and put them in a solid Biblical framework that resonates with those who believe that God no longer – or never did! – care about them. Dr. Lee's missions class really hammered home for me the idea that the mission field wasn't only overseas – that "evangelism" is simply "missions" at home and needed the same care in learning the local culture. This is especially true in a rural church, where customs and attitudes have been formed over the course of decades, if not centuries. Here in New Hampshire, the town I live in and the town I serve have very different cultures and customs, even though they're both considered "rural". One "constant" up here, though, is that New Hampshire rates among the least religious states in the US (often ranked as 50th). For quite some time, the church's roadside sign read: "Skeptics Welcome!". A picture of that sign is on our church website's home page to this day!

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

There was a presentation on church renewal and revitalization in my second year that immediately grabbed my attention. So many congregations that had long, fruitful ministries became ineffective in reaching their communities with the Gospel. Why was that? I've never been satisfied with "good enough" and have always been tinkering with things to improve them. Gordon-Conwell gave me the tools and resources to not only find answers to the questions that arise by a given church's malaise but also how to listen for God's direction as He leads the way in finding the cure to what ails them. My studies at Gordon-Conwell have helped me to discern where a flock under my care is moving in a God-ordained direction vs. a human understanding of what is to be done.

A second way my Gordon-Conwell education has served me is that it was not in a doctrinal echo chamber. Students, staff, and faculty come from different traditions yet have chosen to focus on uniting around the core essentials of the faith while acknowledging that there are other biblically defensible viewpoints. Although I never got to study under him, I will forever

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remember Dr. Paul Lim stating that, while he held strongly to a particular systematic theology it, too, was not without its questions and apparent inconsistencies. People in rural areas, especially here in New England, will be all over the board theologically. A Gordon-Conwell education helped me to know where I stand on disputable doctrinal differences by allowing and encouraging me to engage disparate viewpoints among committed Christians of many “flavors”, and thereby test the strengths and weaknesses of my views and theirs.

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

Daily, personal prayer and Bible study can't be stressed enough! Listening for God's voice while sitting in His presence is vital to developing and maintaining both the heart of a lamb and the hide of a rhinoceros – and you'll need both! For those considering rural, and other small-church, ministry I add this: love your flock, and stay as long as the Lord deems fit. Too many smaller congregations feel that they're mere stepping-stones on the career paths of the pastors who've passed through. Don't be that pastor!