

Alumni Spotlight: Jonathan Romig (MDiv '13, DMin '23)



Current Title: Development Manager at Providence Network

Favorite Professors: Dr. Jason McConnell and Dr. David Horn

Favorite Classes: Church Planting & Growth and Pastoral Skills for Ministry in New England

Favorite Memory: Being in the Doctor of Ministry cohort—I've appreciated going back to Gordon-Conwell after several years of experience to talk about life and ministry with fellow pastors. The longer I attended Gordon-Conwell, the better it got!

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

When I graduated with my MDiv in May 2013, I started to serve as the Associate Pastor at Immanuel Church in Chelmsford, MA. Six months later, a fellow Conservative Congregational Christian Conference (CCCC) church asked if Immanuel Church would take their building to start a new church plant in the town of Westford, MA. It just so happened that Westford was the same town my wife, Monica, and I studied as part of our church planting class.

I pastored the Immanuel Church team that launched Cornerstone Congregational Church in Westford. I continued to serve part-time at Immanuel Church as I transitioned to serving as the only pastor at Cornerstone. I participated in the Ockenga Fellows Program from 2018 to 2020; during the same period, I worked on my Doctor of Ministry, defending my thesis on political discipleship in the local church in the summer of 2022. I served as Cornerstone's pastor until June 2022, and then I transitioned to Colorado to be closer to family.

In September 2022, I started working for a non-profit in Denver called, Providence Network, which provides transformational housing for the most marginalized—men, women, and children coming out of addiction, domestic violence, and homelessness. I currently serve as their Development Manager, helping to raise funds to enable our \$2.2 million budget. I get to build bridges between Providence Network and generous individuals, businesses, churches, and foundations that share a similar heartbeat for our neighbors in Denver.

What did you love about the work you are doing now?

When I was leaving pastoral ministry, I felt unsure of how the gifts and skills I used in the church could translate to a calling outside of the church. I wanted to care for the marginalized in the city of Denver, but I knew I wasn't a counselor, or case worker, or

qualified to be in a position of leadership in a non-profit. As I was looking at Denver Seminary's job website, I came across work in development also known as fundraising.

Here at last, something "clicked." I figured I might be able to use my communications and pastoral skills to advocate for the needs of others and to help this organization. I was not wrong. What I love about working at Providence Network is that it blends the technical tasks I enjoy (managing a donor database, writing fundraising appeals, creating videos for YouTube and Instagram, etc.) and the relational aspects of work I also enjoy (giving tours, grabbing coffee or lunch with a potential donor, sharing stories, etc.). I get to use the tools and people skills to, Lord willing, serve God's kingdom on the streets of Denver.

What are the particular challenges of non-profit work in general and/or the work in your specific context?

Non-profits are uniquely challenging as they do not generate enough income to cover their expenses (ours covers about 28% via rents and program fees). They are also challenging because, unlike a church, they don't have a built-in tithe that helps to generate a steady income flow.

Before I started working in fundraising, when I worked as a pastor, I felt like Christians should first tithe to their local church and then give beyond that to missionaries and non-profits. Now that I am working in development, I'm not sure if our generosity is limited to the church, but it also includes supporting other ministries outside the church as well.

Early on in my journey, I wondered if non-profits were necessary and if the church should do it all. After seeing all the good non-profits provide, I don't believe it's possible for the church to do it all on its own. In my mind, the best is when churches and non-profits partner together, and the resources come from both the congregation's budget and the people in the church giving to non-profits.

The most challenging part of my job is getting the funding we need to continue this really good work caring for the most vulnerable in our city. I rejoice when people and organizations step forward to partner in their generosity. It enables what Jesus called us to do, especially among our brothers and sisters in need.

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

I met my wife Monica at Gordon-Conwell, and the church-planting class we took together helped set the course of our lives for the next decade. Participating in the Ockenga and DMin programs helped us to navigate some difficult ministry times and enrich our ministry overall. My studies at Gordon-Conwell also began to cultivate an awareness of the prophetic ministry, of God's call for justice and compassion to the poor and needy. That was not something I had experienced in my church tradition until I was at Gordon-Conwell, and it was an awakening.

What has been Gordon-Conwell's biggest impact/influence on your ministry?

My DMin thesis on faith and politics has significantly impacted my life and ministry, shaping the way I think about the political discipleship in the local church. My Gordon-Conwell education gave me wisdom and understanding when I needed it the most. In my MDiv program, I learned how to study, preach, and work at a church. In my DMin program, I learned how to engage in cultural turmoil with grace and truth.

What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are considering working in the non-profit realm?

Whether we work in church ministry, non-profit ministry, or in business, education, medicine, or some other field, I believe it should be a calling. Listen to the Shepherd's call and follow the sound of His voice. Don't underestimate the gifts and talents God has given you and the way He has prepared you. But also have a humble heart. Don't overestimate what you can accomplish apart from Christ working in your life.

Whenever I feel overcome with busyness, which is often, I try to recall John 15:4-5: "Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing" (NIV).

If we want to be fruitful in our calling, we have to stay connected to Jesus. And we don't just connect to him so we can get something out of him, such as ministry success, but so that we can get *him*, so that we can get Christ in all his fullness and glory.

Do you have any publications, links, or resources to share?

[View the Linktree](#) to access all of my and Monica's online ministry resources.

Learn more about [Cornerstone Congregational Church](#), [The Nineveh Network](#) for church planting, and [Providence Network](#).