

Alumni Spotlight: Scott Venable (DMin '21)



Current title: Lead Pastor at Northwood Church

Family: Wife: Ashley, Children: Brooklyn, Evelyn, and Asa

Favorite professor: Rodney Cooper

Favorite memory: My favorite memory is all the relationships built with my cohort and professors that last until this day!

Would you tell us about the church you are currently serving?

Northwood Church in Keller, TX (just outside Fort Worth) is a multi-ethnic, multi-generational, multi-ability and multi-lingual church that strives to live and love like Jesus.

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

My DMin degree in redemptive leadership in a multi-ethnic context was pivotal in preparing me to pastor and lead in the beautiful and diverse church that I am leading now. God brought me to Northwood right in the middle of my DMin program and used what I was learning at Gordon-Conwell to become the leader I am today.

What do you love about the ministry work you are doing now?

I love the way our church engages, serves, and brings value to the communities God has placed us in, both locally and globally. To see people changed by Jesus and use their jobs, skills and passions to bless others never gets old.

What are the particular challenges of serving in a large church in general, and in your specific context?

I feel extremely blessed to be leading the church that I am. Our church is not perfect (no church is), but it is unique in its DNA and culture. I know a lot of negative stuff is out there about large churches and some of that may be true and is warranted, but the challenges I have are not because of toxicity, "branding," abuse, immorality, consumerism, etc. The biggest challenges I face are just normal people challenges, leading larger staff and teams, and



navigating the diverse views and politics that comes with being part of a multi-ethnic and multi-generational church.

What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are beginning in ministry?

First, be more in love with Jesus than ministry. Second, be authentically you and who God has created you to be. In other words, learn from everyone but copy no one. Third, have people that speak into your life and build you up. Being a pastor can be extremely lonely. Outside of my family, I wouldn't make it without my mentors, my friends, and my counselor. Being authentic and being transparent goes a long way in being a healthy leader.