

Co-Pastors

Andrew Ford (Blog)

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Co-Pastor

Pastor Andrew leads the missional outreach of GLBC both locally and globally. As well he oversees congregational care, small groups, and much more at GLBC. He graduated from Moody Bible Institute with a Bachelor of Arts in Pastoral Studies and a Master of Arts in Ministry.

Andrew and Jill came to Grand Ledge Baptist Church in 2000 and Andrew enjoys ministry in Michigan very much. Andrew married Jill in 1990 and they have three children: Caleb, Noah, and Abby. Their favorite place to vacation is Maranatha in Muskegon Michigan. They are devoted GREEN BAY PACKER FANS, and they love spending the day at Lake Michigan. Andrew enjoys time with his children, sailing, motorcycles, and most of all - holding his wife's hand.

Brian McLaughlin (Blog)

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Co-Pastor

Pastor Brian leads the student ministries at GLBC (Jr. High & Sr. High) as well as the church's Christian Education. Brian grew up in Columbus, Ohio (Go Bucks!) and attended Miami University. It was at Miami that he was saved by God's grace. After graduation he married his high school sweetheart, Nikki, and moved to Kalamazoo, MI for work in the paper industry. It was through involvement in his local church that Brian felt a desire to attend seminary and serve the Lord as a Pastor. After receiving an M. Div. from Grand Rapids Theological Seminary in Spring 2002, Brian and Nikki moved to Grand Ledge.

Brian loves working with students and helping them grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ. Student ministry is not about fun and games, but about helping students conform to the image of Christ and impact their world for Christ. Of course, there is some fun along the way, but fun does not drive this ministry. Rather, one-to-one get togethers, small groups, service opportunities, and challenging lessons from God's Word is what you will find here!

Brian and Nikki have three children; Elizabeth (6), Zachary (3), and Noah (<1). He enjoys just about anything that involves them.

Brian also loves to read and study. In fact, school is his primary hobby. In 2007 he completed a Master of Theology in Systematic Theology at Calvin Theological Seminary. His emphasis was on the Emerging Church Movement. In 2008 Brian began a Doctor of Ministry at Fuller Theological Seminary. His course work will emphasize leadership, teaching, and spiritual development in the missional church.

John Lemke (Blog)

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Co-Pastor

John grew up in Toledo, Ohio and graduated from the University of Toledo with a B.A. in Economics. While living in Pennsylvania, he met his wife Patti, and in 1998 they married. John and Patti have one child, Jace, born June 2003. After working in manufacturing plants in Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Oklahoma, John and Patti felt that God was calling them into full time vocational ministry. John is now a full-time student at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary, working on his Masters of Divinity degree. In what's left of his spare time, John enjoys watching football, playing golf and volleyball, and reading about history.

What are Co-Pastors?

Andrew, Brian, and John have been serving together at GLBC for a few years now and took on their co-pastor roles starting in January of 2008. They share the pulpit, and lead the congregation (along with the Lay-Elders) together while having specific areas of responsibility that they individually oversee.

- Andrew oversees Missional Outreach & Congregational Care
- Brian oversees Youth Ministry, Christian Education, & Theological Formation
- John oversees Adult Ministries, Assimilation, & Counseling

Who does what?

The co-pastors share big picture leadership: vision, planning, and general direction, while each of us have areas of specialty in ministry. These ministry specialties were assigned according to skills, passions, and experience. We share the pulpit, each of us participating in every sermon series.

Flatter Style of Leadership

Over the last few years we have been exalting the role of an Elder as shepherd and minimizing the lines between pastor and elders. Our goal was to level the playing field of pastors and elders to fit a more biblical model of leadership. In conjunction with this, we had been moving the Elders toward stronger shepherding responsibilities and away from some tendencies toward being a decision making / CEO style of elder team.

Preaching and Sermon Prep

Many people ask how we work out the preaching calendar. After prayer and considering what the people need from the Word, the co-pastors present their sermon series ideas to the Elders for their approval. From there we divide up the text at its natural breaks, see who is available, and finally consider who has desires (if any) for a specific passage.

We work hard on the text together. We study our individual passages, we share notes, and we seek advice on understanding the text as well as delivery. It is not uncommon for us to spend a couple of hours on a Monday discussing unique aspects of the text, an introduction, or application. It is refreshing and encouraging to study together.

Prayer on Fridays

Fridays at 10 has become a very important time for the co-pastors. In the fall of 2007 we preached a sermon series on prayer and we were convicted and led by the Holy Spirit to be more disciplined in prayer. Fridays at 10 was one result of the Lord's work in our lives. We meet to pray for the people of God, special requests, the impact of GLBC, the work of the Holy Spirit, for each other and so much more. We think that this prayer time is the glue that keeps us humble, dependent on God and together as co-pastors.

Mondays at the Table

We spend a lot of time planning together and there is no quick and easy way for us to do this. Mondays is set aside for this and is one of our most important investments of time. A good portion of the day is spent on vision, planning, problem solving, and ministry issues. We always work towards consensus at this level as well as at the Elder board level and this hard work requires humility and patience. The time on Mondays sets the tone for how we lead together.

We hope this brief description of the co-pastor model of ministry is helpful. Please contact us for more information.