

Introduction: Bethel Church, Please Read for Context

James was asked to briefly answer a few basic biographical questions for the purpose of a simple introduction to the Bethel congregation. Below are James' answers to these questions.

Tell us about your family.

I have been married to Wendy for almost 24 years and have 3 kids, Austin (20), Alysse (17), and Ashlea (14). Wendy is a travel planner with a Bachelor's in Mathematics. Austin and Alysse are attending Louisiana Tech University in the fall majoring in Computer Science and Business respectively.



What kind of education do you have?

I am currently working on my 6th degree, a PhD in New Testament Theology at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. I also have earned a Doctorate of Ministry in leadership from George Fox University, along with a Master's of Divinity in Biblical Languages and a Master's in Operational Art and Science. My Bachelor's from East Texas Baptist University is in Christian Ministry and Associate's in the Criminal Justice field.

What experience do you bring to this Senior Pastor position?

I have 28 years of experience as a Senior Pastor, Chaplain, Professor as well as ministry to Youth, College, Worship, and short-term Mission work throughout the US, Honduras, Belarus, and Kyrgyzstan. I have been blessed to travel through 23 countries, serving in 11 congregations while leading 34 single, youth and family retreats. I specialize in generational leadership and have been the keynote and seminar speaker at 16+ conferences and seminars across the country. I have helped marriages by providing 4,000+ hours of relationship counseling, seminars, and retreats.

What is your life mission?

I believe our focus in life is to be Jesus followers, on mission, living out the Gospel and furthering the Kingdom through the Spirit-empowered local church – we are mandated with the primary task of making disciples with the foundation of scripture that guides every aspect of faith and practice of biblical Christianity. John 10.10b is my life verse.

What are your spiritual gifts?

My primary gifts are apostleship, leadership, administration, and teaching.

What is your philosophy of ministry?

The church leads Christ followers into a life of **WORSHIP**, where we **RELATIONALLY CONNECT** others to an authentic life in **JESUS** through His redemptive work on the cross. The **GOSPEL** must remain central to the life of the believer and the activity of the church.

We are given the mission to **MAKE DISCIPLES** through a dynamic **COMMUNITY** of faith, empowered by the **Holy Spirit** and through the **TRUTH** of God's Word, so that He can **TRANSFORM** believers into a healthy, growing church.

I believe the church is **TEAM-led** by **SPIRITUALLY GIFTED** leaders and Christians that recognize we are **ALL** called to **SERVE** in **CREATIVE MINISTRY** and to **CARE** for one another through a small group of intentional relationships, and to live as God's **SENT** people into the world to **SHARE** the Good News by being **MISSIONARIES** of light in darkness.