

Gregg Hall

Ottawa Campus Pastor

Life Church; Olathe, KS

Interviewed by Emily Stratton in Gregg's Office at Life Church, Olathe, KS

June 24, 2013 at 3:30pm

Transcribed by Kaitlin Manley

Abstract: Life Church is a non-denominational church that was planted in Olathe, KS in 2002 in partnership with Resurrection Life Church International (RLCI), an international church-planting organization based in Michigan. In 2012, however, it made the transition into becoming a multi-site church with the launch of a campus in Ottawa, KS. This interview features Gregg Hall, the pastor of the Ottawa Campus. Question focus upon Gregg's time with Life Church and the development of the Ottawa Campus (why Ottawa over other locations, logistics of being a part of a multi-site operation, and goals for the church). Near the beginning of the interview, there are also some questions about Life Church's beginnings as a church plant in 2002 and Life Church's relationship with RLCI.

Note: Interview questions by Emily are written in **bold** type, Gregg's responses are in regular font.

Okay, so it is June 24 and I'm in the office of Life Church hanging out with Pastor Gregg Hall who is the pastor for the Ottawa campus branch of Life Church. And anyways, we'll go ahead and get going.

So Gregg since I just introduced myself to you two seconds ago and you heard a little bit of a spiel about me, I'd be interested in hearing a little bit about your background in terms of where you grew up, how you got connected with the church, whether you grew up in a church or converted later in life...just a little bit more of a background to hear about you as a person.

Okay. I grew up just up the road in Shawnee here in Kansas so I've kind of pretty much been a Kansan my whole life. I did not grow up in church, my family we were CEO Christians, which for me anyway means Christmas and Easter Only Christians. But even that it wasn't every Christmas or Easter that kind of thing, so we periodically went to church. I grew up, from 4th grade on anyway in a broken home and as a result in my own life anyway, started living out just in rebellion and I really just had a deeply wounded heart from all that. The way I acted that out, every kid is different, I acted out in a lot of rebellion and got involved in drugs, you know, at an early age and that kind of thing and was in trouble with the law in middle school and kicked out of school and that kind of thing. What happened was one of my best friends at the time, who had a very similar story to me, we were both just messed up teens. He had committed his life to the Lord and I saw that his life was dramatically changed as a result of that and then 13 months later I gave my life to Christ as well. And so just before I turned 16 is when I gave my life to the Lord and my life was dramatically changed. And so, you know, I began...as I began growing in my relationship with God, I just had a passion to see people be able to experience that same life change as I had because I knew that it was so real. So that's how I ended up becoming a pastor. I've been here at Life Church for six years and my friend who I grew up with, who I, you know, referred to...was as messed up, or more, than I was at that time in our lives who gave his life to the Lord. He is our lead pastor, his name is Clint Sprague and so it's kind of fun that we

grew up together, we were both messed up and throwing our lives away together. He committed his life to Christ and then began sharing his faith with all of us, you know, his friends and a little more than a year later I gave my life to the Lord. We've been pursuing ministry together really for essentially our whole Christian lives anyway for the last, you know, almost...well together anyway 26 years. So that's how I ended up being a pastor here at Life Church.

I was pastor at another church prior to coming here for 8 years and then I've been here for the last 6 years.

Awesome. Well I'm glad to hear that you're so close with the Spragues because I've wanted to be able to meet with them too since they started Life Church and were the founding pastors, but they're out of town for a while as you know. But maybe you can also shed some light in terms of how they got to starting Life Church. I did a little website stalking and read that they were pastors in Michigan with Resurrection Life Church and then it was from there they kind of felt the call to come back to Kansas City and start it up.

Can you speak to me a little bit more about that call? I don't know how...putting words in their mouths or...

Because Clint and I both, neither one of us grew up in church, so we didn't know anything hardly even about the Bible, let alone church lingo. For both of us when we got saved and gave our lives to the Lord, we just wanted other people to be able to experience that same life change, to have a relationship with God and to know the Lord and to know his ways and to be able to know his love and to be able to love him wholeheartedly. Because he had...it wasn't just that our lives, that we began acting better, our hearts were transformed. We were completely different from the inside out and that's what Jesus died for. He wants to have a relationship with all people and to transform lives, to not just...to not just change behavior and unfortunately too many people misunderstand what God and what Christianity and, you know, faith in Christ are all about. We just began sharing what God had done in us with basically anybody that would listen. We didn't realize at the time really that there was a word for that called ministry and so we essentially...we started Bible studies, you know, in our homes and you know, invited people all the time, just that kind of thing. What we discovered over time was that we were essentially living out, you know, the life of a pastor. We were trying to pastor people. We were trying to reach those that didn't know Jesus and then when people did come to know the Lord Jesus, that we were trying to help them grow in their faith and to live out the great and amazing life that God has for us. And so over time we realized, you know, "Wow, we feel called to spend our lives even vocationally as a pastor being able to preach the good news of Jesus that he came and lived a perfect life, died for our sins, rose again, lives forever, and wants us to know him and walk in his ways.

So that's when, even at a pretty young age for both Clint and I, we actually spent...I spent 3 years with an organization called Youth with a Mission [YWAM]. Clint and his wife were actually with that organization for 5 years and we did, you know, we were missionaries essentially and we traveled all over the world and all over the United States and got to share the good news of Jesus and then talk about global missions and how God wants to reach the whole world and how he's calling us to be a part of that. After that I went to college, Clint moved home. Of course we went through some educational process with Youth with a Mission. Clint has a degree in Biblical Studies through YWAM. Anyway, he moved home and became the youth pastor of a church up the road here in Shawnee and we both, you know, grew up in Shawnee and he was

there for about 5 years and then did a couple years of traveling and really kind of doing evangelism and that kind of thing going...visiting a lot of different churches and schools and that kind of stuff. And then ended up as a youth pastor in Michigan and that's where he became affiliated with Resurrection Life Church International, so RLCI, which is the church planting organization that we're part of. While he was up there, just knew...he was the youth pastor up there as well, and it was kind of over time while he was up there realized you know, I'm going to end up taking the next step in ministry and youth ministry. His time in youth ministry was coming to an end and knew that he wanted to begin focus more on reaching adults and reaching teenagers through reaching their parents, you know, that kind of thing. As he pursued that, knew that not only where he was called by the Lord, but really where his heart was, was right back here...kind of in area where we grew up. We're not too far down the road from where both he and I grew up. That's how, he anyway, that's how Life Church got started, excuse me, 11 years ago and it's pretty neat. Got started in a junior high, a middle school right here in Olathe. We were only there for about a year before joining a partnership and merging with, what was then, Cornerstone Church that was here meeting here on this property. It was just a really neat marriage of sorts in that as Life Church was growing and growing out of the middle school and needing a building. Cornerstone was a church that was started with incredible vision and passion to reach this community, to reach young people, to you know, to as well reach the nations, that kind of thing, but had come to a point where they no longer had their senior pastor. They were in need of a pastor and so they pursued Life Church and pursued Clint and said, "Hey, you know, this could be a great marriage. We have a lot of the same visions, same values, that kind of thing. We will merge with you guys and become Life Church if you guys want to, you know, move here." And it's been a really great marriage ever since. It's been really neat.

Neat. So then when that merger happened then about how large was Cornerstone and what was their staff? Do you remember? I know you weren't there for it but...

Yeah, I was not there for it and really don't know. I can't speak to those numbers because I'm just not sure. I think it was under 100, but I could totally be misquoting that. So I'm not sure.

Yeah, yeah. No worries, I just know that Life Church now being pretty large, I mean, you've got all these properties and they're well... well filled, as well, I was visiting one of the services over this weekend and trying to check it out and get a feel for it before coming and talking with you. For really being around for 10, 11 years, there's been a lot of growth. So I was wondering how much of that was from the connection, how much of that was from Life. So I was wondering if you had a perspective on that.

Life Church when they moved out here I think was...I think they were around 150 or so that were meeting in the middle school and then moved out here and, you know like I said, I'm pretty sure that Cornerstone was under 100, yeah, but again I'm not positive on that.

Yeah, no worries. Yeah, so then instead of drilling you on all these things that you weren't actually a part of...so talk to me a little bit more of about how you got connected and when you started coming in. Did you start up being the Ottawa pastor? I'm not sure how long the Ottawa campus has been around. Did you come before Ottawa was started?

When I moved out here I was the youth pastor here for 3 years. I was a youth pastor at a church in Shawnee for 8 years and then moved out here, and that really was just the desire for, again, you know getting to partner, you know, on a daily basis with one of my closest friends. And it's funny, even though Clint and I, you know, grew up together, he's only a year older than me in school, that kind of thing, and only a year older than me in the Lord, he just...there's just a leadership mantle on him that God's given him and many ways has been, you know, a spiritual mentor in my life and certainly friend and life coach in a lot of ways, that kind of thing. It was fun, you know, to think about us getting to work together, you know, and kind of partner on ministry on kind of a day-to-day basis together. So when I moved out here I was the youth pastor here for 3 years and then, you know, moved in transitioned into a role where I've done a number of things here over the last couple years. I was, you know, Connections pastor for a little while, I was over at Life Groups for a little while, I was over kind of like, you know, oh honestly I kind of forget all the things that I've done **(laughter)** since being here. But then our Ottawa campus is a little over a year old now and so it's been a couple years in the making since we began kind of dreaming about it, praying about it, and really giving it serious thought. And then, you know, kind of building the team to help us, you know, launch and that campus, that kind of thing. But we started March of last year and it's been really great. We probably...we've grown approximately 50 people or so, maybe 50 or 60 people. Honestly, we've probably really have grown a lot more than that, it's possible we've grown even close to 75 people in the past year, a little over a year because we had the...couple of the reasons...well in fact just cut me off if I'm going...if I'm starting a rabbit trail. I assume you would want to know why did we pick Ottawa.

Yeah!

Okay, so one of the...there's two primary reasons. A: Clint and our former worship pastor Jared Scholz who now pastors a church in Lawrence.

Greenhouse Culture.

Yeah, Greenhouse Culture. So anyway, they did a funeral for a guy who...he was 19 or 20 young man down in Ottawa, he was connected to a family here at the church and so, in doing that funeral, there were so many young people at the funeral and they just had a strong sense that there's not a church that's passionately reaching out to the community and trying to reach young people and that kind of thing and they just...just a real burden from the Lord for that community, that we want to do something here because there doesn't seem to be...it wasn't in anyway a thought of "there's no good churches here," there didn't seem to be a church that was very actively trying to reach out into the community to reach people. And unfortunately that's the case with too many churches...not really actively reaching out into the community to try and, you know, win people that don't know the Lord. Anyway, so that was kind of where that started and that was going back from probably 7 or 8 years ago, when that funeral took place. And so Clint just kind of from that moment on it was a dream and a passion in his heart to...we should do something here. What that's going to be, we're not sure and when we're not sure but nonetheless." So then we started praying and dreaming about, talking about, what about a multi-side campus? You know, multi-side seems to be working, certainly all over America even all over the world in some cases and then the second reason was, we, over those what's now been roughly the last 6 years before that burden was really laid on his heart and then I started the church, we had growing numbers of people from southern Miami County, Franklin County, that kind of thing that would come traveling up here...coming to the church. So we began realizing "hey, there's a growing number of people that are connecting with our church and with our style of church and you know, the model and, you know, our vision and values and that kind

of thing. We think if we were to, you know, plant a campus down there, we'd be able to reach even more people." So that's kind of how that all ended up.

So as a result, when I...going back to when I said we probably really have grown 75 people or so. When we launched our team, we had approximately 100 people or so that were kind of committed to that launch. Well probably 20-30 of those people were from Olathe who made a 6 month to a year commitment to be down there either twice a month or every week to help get the church going. And the whole original goal and vision was that as they made the 6 month to a year commitment that as we reached more people and grew down in that community, those people would eventually be replaced. So really just kind of just sheer numbers comparing, you know, numbers to numbers, it reflects probably roughly 50 people, but in actuality it's really more than that from that area because probably 90 percent or more of the people from Olathe that helped us get the church started are now back here...are now on our north campus.

Great. So then in terms of being outreach-focused, what does that look like in terms of, how are you going about that outreach and how to you implement that?

Yeah, there's a lot of different things that we do. From the most basic of things we do advertising, you know, we've run commercials on TV, we three to four times a year do mailers, you know, that go out to literally thousands and thousands of people. You know, all of Olathe, you know, Spring Hill, Gardner, now of course, you know, Ottawa...essentially almost all of Franklin County. When we do our kind of quarterly, you know, postcards and invite to the church that kind of thing we do those kinds of things and it's amazing, you know again, the percentage is not high but a lot of people come to church and come visit and check the church out that kind of thing because they get that mailer in the mail. We do things like...here in Olathe every year there's the Old Settler's Parade, it's the largest parade in Kansas and we're a part of that every year. We have, you know, approximately 200 people or more that show up, we're part of the parade, we have several different floats, our worship team is up there and so we're doing music and then we hand out water bottles every year, we hand out approximately 10,000 bottles of ice cold water. Every year we have the whole flat bed, you know, trailer that's a part of the float that's full of, you know, the big ice troughs and with water in them, that kind of thing and as we're going through the parade we're handing out water. We do little bags of candy for kids and stuff like that, so that's just one of those things. And then people understand because of banners and that kind of thing and we're all wearing our Life Church orange t-shirts so the...everybody that's out there knows, you know, Life Church here and so they see it and it's just kind of a connection that, you know, in many ways sometimes it connects with a person's heart and they just think "man, I need to be in church or I want to be in church." Some people have grown up in church and have had a lot of negative church experiences and then when they see people having a lot of fun, doing some different types of things out in the community, it kind of opens up their heart to "well maybe that's a church that I might actually enjoy, you know, going to."

Then we also have three booths at the...throughout the carnival itself. And there, we, you know, we always do, you know, sign up for prizes. We do free giveaways, that kind of thing. We always do free helium balloons like for the kids so they come by. And so it's a way just to interact with thousands and thousands of people out in the community that otherwise, they normally wouldn't come in our doors, but because we get to bump into them out in the community and we've been there every year. Probably this might...this is either going to be our 9th or 10th year, I'm not exactly sure coming up. That's just one of those neat things.

We have a ministry here at the church that's all, you know, volunteer leader led, it's called Adopt a Block and they've kind of adopted one particular block not too far up the road and they go in that community and knock on those doors twice a month every Saturday, not every...two Saturdays a month and just trying to meet tangible needs. Whether it's, you know, raking yards or finding out other small home remodeling projects that people either can't afford or they're too old to do, you know, that kind of thing that they might need help with. Maybe it's a family that financially is not able to but their, you know, their washer or dryer is broken and so we're somehow, somehow able to come up with those needs. They're having big birthday parties for kids, you know, there, stuff like that. Or they'll come by and bring meals or just offer to pray with people, that kind of thing and over time they're building relationships with people and connecting and so reaching out in that way.

You know we have...we're not doing it this year, but we've done every year for a long, long time a massive kind of 4th of July event here at church; giant inflatables and you know, lots of food, you know, that kind of thing. The Great Mall of the Great Plains does a fireworks show every year and out here on our property is a great place to watch it and so you know, we've done music and games, you know, just all that kind of stuff and it's just a fun way to, you know, "hey, if you want to have fun on 4th of July, find some friends," you know that kind of thing so we end up with literally a thousand or more people here.

A lot of different things just like that where it's either something that we're doing at church that's a relevant type thing that we invite people to and get people here or we're out in the community doing things, you know, like that...so a lot of different ways like that.

Great.

Probably at the same time the biggest thing is that because part of the DNA of our church is that God's called everyone one of us, not just pastors or missionaries, that kind of thing, to reach those that don't know the Lord because God has a passion for the whole world. And so that's part of the DNA of who we are as a church and that message gets shared on a regular basis, not just through the preaching of the word, but just, you know, if you were here this week and you saw, you know, there was an invitation to make a decision to follow Christ...that happens at every service. And so as a congregation, everyone knows "I want my friends or my neighbors or my family or my coworkers who don't know God, I want them to know God. God has changed my life and I want them to know." So it's just...kind of the biggest thing that we do is communicating and teaching the people that, you know, come to Life Church, teaching Lifers that you have a responsibility even according to the scripture to reach out, you know, to the community and invite people. And so not everybody is gifted in being able to figure out how to verbally communicate their faith, but everybody has been gifted somehow, somehow, you know, your gifts might be working on cars where you can help somebody in that way. Your gifts might be cooking really good food, you know, as you invite your friends over for dinner, you know, that kind of thing, that could be a way as an open door as you build relationships with people it then makes it easier to simply say "hey, we go to church on the weekends, we love our church. We'd love for you guys to come with us sometime." And then as people come to church, they hear the message of the gospel and God wants to change your life, that kind of thing.

Great. So then once people get...once they come into the church then you're able to bring some people in, how do you get them connected? What kinds of things do you do there?

Yeah. A lot through different events that we do that could be one type of vents for people to come to, rub shoulders with, hopefully meet some new people, that kind of thing. Some of the things that I even mentioned whether it's 4th of July event, or you know, the parade or you know, we do marriage simulcasts if you want to come just kind of strengthen your marriage or just different things like that. And then all throughout the year we have Life Groups that we strongly encourage people all the time, you know, regularly be a part of a Life Group, so you know, we might be a really big church but we're also in comparison, just a really small town. And the small town feeling is that people know each other and can get connected with each other and have family and connectedness and a relationship. So that's really where Life Groups come in because you can walk into our church in particular because we have three different services, you know, sometimes it can be hard to see the same people from week to week because you may have come to church Saturday night last week, but you came on Sunday morning at 9 next week for whatever reason, your kid might have a ball game, you end up coming at 11. So, you know, that's just the way our church is, but if you get involved in a Life Group, then there's one night a week or twice a month or something like that, you're interacting with the same people and you can really build relational connectedness that way.

The other way, it's not as effective as a Life Group, Life Groups are the most effective way. Probably the second most effective way is just serving at church, whether you serve, you know, once a week at a service or once every couple weeks, that kind of thing, you know, in kids ministry or at the café or as an usher or greeter, something like that. Excuse me, now again, you're beginning to rub shoulders with a lot of the same people, seeing the same faces, and being able to get connected with people and you know, build relationship and that kind of thing. Those are the two primary ways but Life Groups are always the most effective way if you really want to get connected and grow relationally which is a part of God's plan, he wants so much more from us than to just go to church. You know, he wants us really to be a part of a family of believers, then Life Groups are the best way to do that.

Yeah, and I had scanned over the topics and the different Life Groups that are available here, is there a different set of ones for the Ottawa campus or are they shared between both of the campuses?

Well all of them are open to anybody that wants to come for the most part at anytime, but we do have Life Groups, you know, where...some Life Groups meet in different locations, most of them meet in someone's home and yeah, we have Life Groups going on and active and stuff like that in Franklin County as well because it's pretty unrealistic, for the most part people are going to drive all the way out here, although some do for different types of Life Groups. Like, for instance, we have a group called Life Riders where they meet on Wednesday nights, you know, they all ride motorcycles, they get here, they meet, they go ride somewhere, they go out to dinner, you know, that kind of thing...again it's a fun kind of way to meet people and have common interests and stuff like that. Well we don't have one of those down in Ottawa and so some of our people from down there come up here on Wednesday nights and go riding, you know, with that group of people and...but we also have different Life Groups that are going on down there as well.

Great. So kind of shifting focus back to just the Ottawa campus in particular then, since I haven't seen the Ottawa campus and I've only been to the service here, how would you describe the differences between the two? You have a smaller setting, you're in a school

as opposed to being in a building, what kind of dynamics, would you say, are different between the two?

Well since it is a multi-site and not just a church plant, the whole vision behind multi-site is that you are trying as much as you can in the extension campus to replicate everything that's going on at the original campus to where if people walk into Ottawa they felt like they had the same experience as when they walked into Olathe. The things, of course, the major differences are the set-up of the building, you know, that kind of thing, you know, we are a mobile church in that we set-up and tear-down every week, so it's obvious that you're in a school building, you know, when we are there and that it's not our own. You know, we have a, you know, a coffee shop up here and we serve lattes and specialty drinks and that kind of thing, we have some food that's for sale here, nothing that gets cooked or anything like that but...you know, and different drinks, we don't have that down there. You know, we have a coffee bar down there, but it's just coffee, that's all we've got, you know, you've got coffee and you've got cream and sugar and that kind of thing and that's it, you know, that's all we offer. You know, we have a small resource center up here, we have a pretty cool, small resource center down there as well...t-shirts and just different things like that, you know, to purchase. Our kid's ministry, the rooms are bigger here, they're all painted, they look cool, they're fun. Down there we try and create the same atmosphere with regard to the lessons are the same as they do here, we try and create the same fun and energetic and deeply spiritual atmosphere, you know, the music would be the same, all that kind of thing, but the rooms are not all colorful and down there and you know, some of the classrooms there's what the kid's school assignments that got stapled to the walls and you know, that kind of thing down there.

So, those are really the primary differences down there. Of course, the only other real primary difference is that the message on a regular basis, it's not 100 percent of the time, but really 75-80 percent of the time it's our lead pastor Clint preaching, bringing the word via our video and so...worship is live, kids ministry is live, everything is the same...the message primarily is delivered through the video.

How do people tend to respond to having the video as opposed to having a live?

Yeah, that's a great question. Most people respond really well and that's why multi-site is working. The neat thing about multi-site too is there's not just one way of doing it. There's multi-site campuses that have four or five different campuses and there's a live teaching pastor at every one and so they might be preaching essentially the same message, but there's a great different in personality and style, you know, preaching, that kind of thing. But the core DNA and vision and values of those churches are all the same and so it works and there are other churches that are multi-site and some...there's some rural multi-site churches where, you know, one church and one town, it's the same pastor and he's there and it's the same name and all that kind of stuff...same vision and values, but he preaches at this church at 8 o'clock and he preaches at this church at 10 o'clock and then he preaches at this church at noon and that's the best way they've found to do it at some rural settings and then there's others that do the video like what we're doing. So you know what, it's a varied as the individual and so the neat thing is, it obviously is working because our church is growing and people are coming to know the Lord, so there are new believers that are joining the church. There are people getting baptized and growing in their faith and Life Groups are springing up and growing and stuff like that. And then there some that, just like they could visit our Olathe campus here and decide that this church isn't necessarily for them, they could come and visit and watch the video and decide that that's...but you know what I've found is that, I don't have any way to really quantify this but I

really believe anybody that comes and decides the video really isn't for them, they're really deciding that the church isn't so much for them because for somebody that would come and really connect with Life Church and our vision and values, the video, you know...research shows that even in a bigger church, if you were to go to a big church that while the pastor is preaching, there's also a screen because it's big enough, you can see his face better on one screen and that kind of thing. When you're beyond the 13th row, you watch the screen anyway. You don't typically watch the live person, because you can just see better! So it's amazing, it's fun. If you were to come down, love for you to visit anytime, come down, pastor tells a joke, people down there laugh just like they would here, you know, if he asks for a response, you know, hey, in which our lead pastor Clint, I don't think you've been here when he's preached right?

No.

So many times he'll say in the course of his message, you know, we're talking about whatever, you know "repeat after me," and, you know, have a response, well everybody does it down there it too. So it's like you just kind of get lost in the fact that you're watching a video.

And then in terms of the logistics of being a mobile church then, about how many people do you have and how do you organize getting everything set up and taking everything down?

I have a great assistant (**laughter**), that organizes that all. We have a great team of people that meet every morning at 7:30 there at the middle school. So our trailer and our van and stuff like that, they set up here and so we leave here at about 6:50 and we get down there about 7:25 or so and at 7:30 the doors are open and we start unloading everything and get it all set up. The setting up the stage and the worship equipment all that kind of stuff, all the band equipment takes the longest amount of time and then they do their thing, do their sound check and their short rehearsal for getting ready for the morning and they're ready to go at around 9:15 or so. And then everybody that's coming early to serve and that kind of thing on Sunday mornings, we meet together for prayer. And then church ends around 11:40-11:45 that kind of thing and then it's around 12...our goal is to wait at least 15 before we start stacking the chairs and stuff and so it takes us 45 minutes to an hour to break everything down, get it loaded back up and we're back in the van heading back up here.

We have a great team of people that help out with all that stuff and so of course, all the band, they meet early, there's some people that meet early...just their job is to set up the chairs and they set up signs and they do this and that and that kind of thing so it's a great team.

Mhm. Is there a rotation schedule or is it usually the same people each week?

That all depends on how often people are committing to serve, so there are many people, they're there every week helping set up. And then there...I would say probably roughly 60 percent of the team, they're there every week and then there's about 40 percent that like serve twice a month and so...kind of every other week that team gets shuffled a little bit and that kind of thing. That's probably fairly close to how the team is assembled.

And then in terms of long-term visions, I know you guys just got settled a little over a year ago but, as you're planning and seeking what the future of the Ottawa campus looks like, do you guys have...is a building on the radar? Moving out of the school? Are video services still going to be something that continue on? Keeping that kind of shared teaching throughout?

We're taking it, as far as video is concerned, we're taking that kind of all one week at a time. The assumption is that it will remain video indefinitely, but we're not locked into that, we're open to hey, we might decide in the future that we think it's going to be even better to have a different teaching pastor down there that's live every week. So we're open to that and that's kind of the fun adventure of it all. But we don't have any plan for that, we just...it's a possibility, it could happen. The assumption is that it will be video indefinitely.

As far as a building is concerned, we definitely would love to have a building, but that's kind of similar to where Life Church was going back 10 years ago in that what happened was just really an amazing open door that God brought to the church. And so we're waiting for something like that. We're either going to grow to the point where financially we can realistically begin looking at either a building or a piece of property to build or that kind of thing because we're not there yet. Or something crazy is going to happen and God's going to open up this miraculous door and just drop in our laps something that will work beautifully. So is it on the radar, is the word that you used...yes, but we don't have any like imminent plans. One year from now want to have our own building or that kind of thing, because it's really just a matter of hey, it's part of...we got to grow the church and you know, you can't just go out and get a building just because you want one, you've got to...there's always kind of a balance of faith and faith doesn't negate wisdom. There's always a balance of God's call to live a life of faith, but not foolishness. So when we feel like the time is right, whatever that's going to look like, then we'll jump. We'd want to be in a building but we don't have a specific timeframe.

I just lost the question that I was going to ask next. I'll ask another one in the meantime until it comes back to me. So then in terms of replicating the same services that kind of happen here, when it comes to doing things like the worship songs and the music, do you do the same lineup of songs as well?

No, we don't do exactly the same songs. All of the music is kind of all in the same genre, so to speak, same...roughly the same worship bands or songwriters, that kind of thing. So again, the goal is that the worship environment would be duplicatable right here as well. As far as the exact same songs every week, we don't do that. It's not really our style as a church. There are some churches out there that at every week, week in and week out, that service is going to be 75 minutes on the dot; worship is going to be 22 minutes on the dot, that kind of thing. And that's all fine and good, that's just not our style. It's not Pastor Clint's style, at all to be...he might preach a message that one week it would be very short for him and unusual, but it could be 25 minutes one week—that hardly ever happens—short for him would be, honestly, it would be 35 minutes. The next week it could be 47 minutes, I mean, it's just...that's just kind of who we are as a church. We try and have things organized and structured where we don't feel like we're a "fly by the seat of our pants-type church," but we're also not that structured so much that it's rigid, that kind of thing.

Some churches that go, we actually do...we record Saturday night, that message, and it gets shown Sunday morning off of a hard drive. Some churches do the satellite delayed feed and what happens is that multi-site churches...the original campus starts at 9, well wherever the

other campus is at starts at 9 as well, they know worship here is going to go 22 minutes and worship there is going to go 22 minutes and there's only a couple minute delay within that message and there's really only room for a few minute delay within that message. That could never be us, we're just not wired that way, and we don't want to be. That's not bad that other churches do that, it's just not who we are.

That would take a lot of planning. Get everything done to clockwork. So I remember the question I was going to ask next. As well as...so being the pastor at Ottawa, and thinking about growth I was asking about the potential of a building in the future but, what it is like as well having your office located up here, being new and being able to have all the resources and the staff that you're working with is certainly important. Do you feel like it's difficult not having as ready of access to people that might be further south? Can you talk to me about that?

Yeah, it definitely presents its challenges and I'm down there once or twice a week. I'm down there once a week every week because my wife and I lead our youth ministry and stuff down there on Wednesday nights. And then, just this week I'm going to be down there tomorrow meeting with some people during the day, that kind of thing. We knew going into it that I'm going to spend a decent amount of time on the road traveling down there. It's only 30 minutes down the road so there...in bigger cities, most pastors don't live within 30 minutes of their church because in big cities it takes you 30 minutes to get anywhere just because of traffic. So, it's not a big deal at all, but it does present its challenges because again, being more of a smaller community, there's a much greater sense of community many times than...even though we're suburban here we're not city, but Olathe...compared to Ottawa, people come up to Olathe. When people come up to the city, they're talking about coming up to Olathe because there's everything right here in Olathe that they might need down there, whether it be Home Depot or just more restaurant options or the movie theater, shopping, that kind of this, it's right here for them. It presents its challenges, but you know, you've just got to overcome them by A: raising up great leaders down there as well like for Life Groups and stuff like that and then you just know I'm just down there a few times a week.

Okay, so then a couple more things before I take away your whole afternoon away from you. This one might make some quick thinking to have to come up but I'm always interested in hearing are there any stories or anything that's particularly sticks out in your mind in terms of starting up Ottawa and being a part of that or anything you'd want to share?

Hmm...any stories.

And if you don't think of any that's okay (laughter). It's always an awkward question to ask like "tell me a story! Ready go!"

Yeah, I don't know that I have any great stories. For us...if I were to write a book on multi-site and...how some of the things that we've learned along the way, that kind of thing. It's not...this would not be unique to the books that are already out there on it. It definitely, to do it well, costs more money than you would originally think and it takes more time to really prepare, particularly if you're going to go the video route because to have that, to do it well, to do it with quality, you know that kind of thing...like for instance our media team here, one of the things that they did not account for was the size of the video file in...because they're thinking was "hey, we record

stuff all the time and we show it all the time or whatever. We record the message every week anyway because we show it online.” Well in order then to project a 40 minute file onto a massive screen versus just on your computer screen in order to make it look good, we had all kinds of problems and issues. In fact, we had issues literally up to the week before we had our very first service, we kept, excuse me, having video problems and so, excuse me.

No problem.

Planning ahead, troubleshooting, doing everything further in advance than you would think you would need to and it's going to cost more money.

But at the same time, one of the greatest stories that I can share really, I mean, it's not so much a specific story, but it's, live life with passion and vision and have goals and dreams and desires...even as a church. Unfortunately where the church even universal is failing is where particular leaders have lost great vision and passion to we can reach our community and grow people in their faith and if you don't have that vision and that passion and that desire, then your church ultimately begins to die and that's never been God's plan. You know, God is alive and so if the living God lives inside of us, that causes growth for the individual—his desire and plan for us is to grow in our love for him everyday, more and more, and it also means that every church in the world should grow whether it was at least by one person. It should grow because every believer has a responsibility to reach out into their community and to win people to the Lord. And if we all take that responsibility seriously...it's just like any restaurant, any movie, anything, any organization, everyone knows the most effective way of growth is word of mouth. If you go to a restaurant and you loved it...most restaurants don't grow primarily through advertising, but they grow...advertising can be great, but they grow primarily through positive word of mouth advertising. And so if every person in a church took that same approach “hey, I love my church. We would love for you guys to come this weekend,” then the church grows...people come to know the Lord, they get to walk in his ways and get to enjoy the abundant life God made us for.

That's not really a specific story, but I think it is one that's important.

Yeah, good. And so then my last question is, since Life Church when Clint and Mary started it, it was planted by RLCI. I was interested in hearing a little bit more about the connections with RLCI and what being an affiliate church with that organization looks like today.

Yeah. One of the things it looks like, of course RLCI has a board that oversees all the churches and so we're accountable to that board. Pastor Clint meets...he is actually now a part of the leadership board of elders as a part of Resurrection Life Church International, whereas he originally was not and now he is. So there's a governing board of RLCI and so we're accountable to RLCI as far as the vision of the church, the values of the church, our theological stance, what we believe according to the scriptures, that kind of thing. So there is oversight by RLCI in that regard and that's one of the things that it looks like.

Within RLCI there is the freedom that because it's a church planting organization, you could go to a lot of different RLCI churches and they would look very different when you walk in. One of them...worship styles vary greatly, teaching styles could vary greatly, but it's ultimately the vision and the values...what are our theological beliefs? What's the ultimate vision of reaching the lost, of growing disciples and growing believers and that kind of thing? Those are...all those

core values are the same and so that's where the DNA ultimately of each church would be the same but it could look, its presentation style, could look very different from church to church.

Cool. No, that's perfect. I had kind of gone through the websites of some of the other affiliate churches and one of them was just kind of cracking me up...I think it was Conquers Incorporated and it was a rotating ministry that has like these bodybuilding guys that run around and smash things and I thought, "this is a lot of diversity in the churches that are there!" (Laughter).

Yeah, yeah.

So I'm always interested in hearing some of the networking and how churches keep connected beyond just the local states.

One of the things is too, RLCI has a big church network conference every year and we go to that every year. It's not required, but it's basically heavily encouraged that at least the senior leaders of all the churches would be there. And so that's one of the great ways of continuing to be connected relationally with churches and again, the vision and values and DNA and stuff like that. So there's different things like that. Then that's kind of like...and that's open to not just RLCI churches, that's just kind of a church leaders conference...we go to it every year, it's put on by RLCI. But then there's also, Pastor Clint every year goes to...they have a retreat where they do it once a year, it's late in the summer and it's for all the senior pastors of all the RLCI churches are invited to come. So it's much more tight-knit, smaller group as far as on a relational connectedness and accountability, stuff like that...it's a really good thing for all the senior leaders to be a part of and be encouraged by each, strengthened by each other, that kind of thing and kind of "hey, this is where, you know, we're headed this year and things that we want to keep, let's make sure we're keeping the main thing, the main thing."

And then when RLCI sends leaders out to do church plants, do you know, you know might not know, but do you know how much in terms of financial resources they are able to equip people with? Or is more of like pat on the back, we'll bless you...do your best?

Again don't quote me on it, but like for instance, I'm familiar with how Greenhouse just got started. RLCI, they do it a little bit differently now than when they first got started but, they do kind of like a matching grant so there is initiative and some ownership responsibility on the...if somebody stands up and says "I want to plant a church. I feel like God's calling me to plant an RLCI church wherever. I'm going to go plant a church. Well I believe God's called me to do it, I've got the vision for it, I believe God's going to provide for me and so I'm going to set a goal to raise X number of dollars because obviously we need money to help get the church going." Well then RLCI says "We're going to match you, whatever you raise and basically, essentially get financial commitments from wherever...we're going to match that up to a certain amount." And what specifically that amount is, I don't remember...\$10,000 is what's coming to my mind, but again don't quote me on that.

You know, if you wanted to email me some of this things, like you're...if you'd like specifics on that, like an answer to that question, I can find out and I can get you that answer.

Sure! That'd be awesome. I always feel bad probing about finances but...

Pastor Clint could have been able to tell you...bam! This is what they do. It's not anything we keep secret. If you want to send me a follow up email "hey, here's a couple things we talked about, but you didn't have the real specifics to." There was another question earlier that I couldn't remember, I was saying "this is what I think is, but don't quote me on it..." Oh, it was how big was Cornerstone at the time and how big was Life Church. I can find that stuff out this week or whatever and I can get you the answer to it if you want to send me a couple follow up questions or whatever "hey, here's the specifics that I was hoping you could get," or whatever and I can get you that.

Sweet, I'll do that!

I can't remember specifically.

No problem. Yeah, and I should be meeting with Jared from Greenhouse a little bit later this week too.

Oh, great! He would be able to answer that question. He would know exactly "here's what RLCI will match up to this point." He'll know exactly as far as how they help churches get started. That will be a great question for him. In fact, he would know the answer also of how big was Life Church at the time.

Yeah, because he was here when Life started, right? That's what I thought I read.

So if you're meeting with him...if you wanted you could probably

Just bombard him with all the questions (laughter).

...you'd probably get the answer from him than I'll be able to get it to you.

And then, okay so...I'm hitting you with more questions than what I thought. So then as Jared was a part of starting up Life and then as Greenhouse is also a plant from RLCI, what is his relationships currently to Life Church right now or is it...has there been a breakaway where he's kind of doing his own thing now or?

Pastor Clint is on his board so he's kind of helping oversee on board level Greenhouse Culture. But as far as relationship and connectedness and stuff like that we're kind of like sister churches now. Relationship is we're all great friends and we're kind of...we're a part of the same mission together, you know, that kind of thing, but financially there's no connection, that type of thing. Events that we do...we don't do stuff together, not because we don't want to but Lawrence is roughly 40 minutes away so that kind of thing. So great friends, we're all in this whole thing together, we're all part of the same team, but as far as like direct affiliation...the only real direct affiliation anymore is the fact that Pastor Clint is on his board.

Cool. Well I think that covers most of the things that I was out to look for so thanks again for meeting with me.

Yeah, you're so welcome. It was great to meet you.