

# **GOD GROWS**

The Stepnowski Family on mission  
in Lansing with Jesus

Sent through MCMD





## Mission

To help others know Jesus, follow him in every area of their lives, and make disciples of Jesus who make more disciples.



## Strategy

Cultivating intentional relationships with our neighbors and others in the city of Lansing, seeking to meet their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, and creating environments for authentic community.

Helping people get rooted in God's Word and a lifestyle of prayer and worship through bible studies, conversations, and life together.

Challenging and equipping people to be sowers of the gospel (disciplemakers), living out Jesus's truth and inviting others to do the same.



## Values

This is not an exhaustive list, but these are our core values out of which all our actions and decisions flow.

- Being Real (Authentic, honest, and vulnerable)
- Being a Safe Haven (Creating safe places)
- Being Equippers (Making disciples who make disciples)
- Being Generous (Time and money)
- Being Good Stewards of God's Creation (Through environmentally sustainable practices)
- Being Welcoming (No matter age, gender, sex, ethnicity, beliefs, etc.)
- Being Connected (Leveraging resources in the city to better our community)
- Being Healthy (Stewarding our bodies and minds to glorify God)



Starting with our Churchill Downs neighborhood and extending out to other areas of Lansing where God leads, we want to see people transformed by the love of Jesus and living an abundant life in community with those around them. God is the one who grows us to be more like Him, and as He does that, the people of Lansing will look out for each other's needs, lift up the marginalized, and continue making disciples for Jesus throughout Lansing, Michigan, and the world.

We spend time intentionally getting to know our neighbors and building relationships of trust with them. That might look like sharing a cup of coffee, helping with yardwork, connecting over a meal, or joining them in whatever activities they enjoy, as well as inviting them into what we are doing. As needs become evident, and as God paves the way, we leverage both our own resources and those of the community to meet those needs. All the while, we are demonstrating, in word and action, who Jesus is and inviting people into a deeper relationship with Him. And as they come to know Christ, we continue to walk alongside them and invite them to join Jesus's mission, challenging and equipping them to love the marginalized like Jesus did, tell others about who He is and make disciples for Him.

Our goal is to be like block pastors. We will know our flock, and they will know that we are a safe space and that they can come to us for shelter and guidance. Our house is a place of prayer, worship, and fellowship, where people gather weekly for worship, bible studies, and community meals. Our ministry has three main branches which overlap and are not exhaustive, but are where we spend most of our time: Men/women discipleship, youth, and gardening.

### **Men's/women's ministry**

Phil is involved in a ministry called Network 20 International, which focuses on discipling men in their 20's. He meets with young men whom he encounters throughout Lansing, makes sure they feel known and listened to, and challenges them to live as a fully engaged disciple of Jesus. At the same time, Elizabeth is building similar relationships with women throughout Lansing, inviting them into deeper communion with God.

### **Youth**

God has blessed and has been with us as we minister to the students at Trinity Church's youth group, and he is blessing our interactions with the kids in our corner of Lansing. There is a lot of strife and heartache among the youth in our neighborhood, and we have been able to let several of them know that we are there for them and on their side by coaching their soccer team, playing basketball with them, fixing their bikes, and just being present with them. Kids always benefit from stable, loving adults in their lives, whether the kids are in struggling families or great ones. Several kids in our neighborhood know that our house is safe and open to them, and we will continue to engage others, coach them in their interactions with each other, and invite them to know Jesus more.

## **Gardening**

We want to use gardening as a context for community building, connecting with people, and growing healthy produce. We are starting with our yard and the yards of interested neighbors, and hopefully overflowing into a public space that we can make into a beautiful getaway in our neighborhood. We will provide the knowledge, encouragement, and support necessary to invite people into gardening as a way for them to relax, connect with the earth that God has made, and feel empowered to improve the health of their families and communities.

