

# GOD GROWS

The Stepnowski Family on mission  
in Lansing with Jesus

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## Mission

To help others know Jesus, grow in Jesus, and share Jesus with those around them.



## 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 neighbors get rooted in God's word, being nourished by the Father rather than by us.

Challenging and equipping people to be sowers of the gospel, 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 Inclusive (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 will 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 out 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 we get to know them and learn their needs (both of individuals and the community as a whole) we will leverage our resources and the city's resources to meet those needs. All the while we are showing them, in word and action, who Jesus is and inviting them 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.

We will 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 will be a place of prayer, worship, and fellowship, where people gather weekly for worship, bible studies, and community meals. Our ministry will have three main branches which will overlap and are not exhaustive but are where we will spend most of our time: Men/women discipleship, gardening, and youth.

### **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 is continuing meeting with those he is discipling and reaching out to the young men who live in our neighborhood and whom we encounter throughout Lansing. He makes sure they feel known and listened to and challenges them to live the life God is calling them to. At the same time, Elizabeth will be building relationships with the women in the neighborhood and inviting them into deeper communion with God.

### **Gardening**

We want to use gardening as a context for community building, connecting with people, and meeting the hunger needs of Lansing. How this plays out will depend on the needs, desires, and culture of our neighborhood, but we hope to use both our own yard and public space to grow healthy produce for the community and create beautiful spaces where people want to be and to take care of. 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.

## Youth

God has blessed and 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. Kids always benefit from stable, loving adults in their lives, whether the kids are in struggling families or great ones. The kids in our neighborhood are beginning to know that our house is safe and open to them, and we will continue to engage them and coach them in their interactions with each other.

