

My name is Michael Clark, I am 29 years old, I have been married to my beautiful wife Cynthia for over eight years. I am thankful to the Lord for placing her in my life. She has been a strong support, standing by me from the lowest to the highest points of my life. Cynthia has been a true God-send, she has been my best friend, she is faithful, devoted, intelligent, beautiful and willing to support me and work alongside me in the ministry.

My testimony begins in St. Paul, AB where I was raised my entire childhood. It was at the age of four when I accepted Jesus Christ into my heart as Lord and Saviour. After service on a Sunday afternoon at the dinning room table, my brother and I made the conscious choice to invite into our life. Two years later we were water both water baptized and then filled with the Holy Spirit a year later. Around age of 12, I clearly felt the call of God upon my life to be a pastor. There was no defining moment, no audible voice. Only a strong passion and desire that was instilled in me to pursue ministry. My heart was to go to Northwest Bible College so that I may encourage and lead others into the Kingdom.

Two years later at the age of 14, my parents divorced. I had always envisioned them going the distance, yet after 16 years of marriage, it came to a sudden and shocking halt. On top of the divorce, I also endured peers teasing and bullying me on a constant basis, beginning in grade one and following me through to grade 12. Due to those combined sequence of events, I fell into a depression and blamed the Lord for creating me to be junk and allowing my parents to divorce. This depression I had spiraled into would last for two years. Around the age of 16, a Youth Pastor had come to visit from Camrose, AB who shared the message at my home church (Bethel Family Worship Centre). The Pastor that night, orchestrated an altar call, which would become a catalyst to change. It renewed my relationship with the Lord, setting me free from a depression that had taken me captive. That day I had begun a journey of healing that would last eight more years.

After I had graduated from High School in 2005, I made a bolt from St. Paul, AB to Edmonton, AB. A city where I would seek enrolment to attend Vanguard College (my dream school). I had submitted my student application and received my acceptance within a short time period after applying. The dilemma which I encountered was my application for Student Loans. During the application process I received partial funding and was completely oblivious to challenging the appeal process. Therefore, I withdrew myself from Vanguard and worked full-time for the next year in order to save up enough money to return again in the following school year of 2006/07. That year I had to work full-time was one of the toughest years of my life. I was in a new city, no longer living with my family. I was unable to find a church where I felt that I could call home. On top of that, I felt as if I was on the outside looking in at the school where I thought that I should be attending.

As my first year in the city had drawn to a conclusion there were two major events which would awaken my faith. The first event was when I re-applied for part-time enrolment into Vanguard, once again I instantly received my acceptance letter in the mail. Having been accepted, I felt the need to search for a home church. I found a home in Living Hope Christian Centre which would be the place the Lord would direct me to discover my Bride. The second event, which would also shape me, was coming to the realization after a semester of attending school, that Vanguard was my dream, it was my desire. It was not where the Lord had directed me to complete my education. Therefore, after a semester I resigned and a year later I married the love of my life.

Cynthia and I, slowly began ministry shortly after we married. We have been involved in the ministry for the last eight years, since 2008. Ministry commenced at Gateway Alliance Church in Edmonton, AB. While we volunteered at Gateway, Cynthia and I were responsible for co-ordinating upper elementary children's ministry and had been involved with several other ministries. We had been with the church for over three years until the call to full-time ministry was once again confirmed. Simultaneously, while we were attending Gateway, I had worked 6 different jobs in a span of two years. It felt as if I had been running away from the call that the Lord placed on my life. It was not until the final job that I had been working at where I felt completely dissatisfied. I asked the Lord, "What would you have me do? Would you like me to go to Living Faith Bible College?" Within two hours of asking the Lord that question, I was notified by employer that I was getting laid off. Everything lined up for us logistically and in the summer of 2010 we packed our belongings and moved to Caroline, AB as divinely directed by the Holy Spirit.

While we were attending Living Faith Bible College (now called Clearwater College). The four years we spent there, shaped and formed us into who we are today. I learned the importance of not just knowing who I am in Christ, but believing that my identity is found in Him. I discovered that my identity, who I thought I was, was not linked to the person that people labeled me as, growing up as a child. That person was not the man who God made and designed me to be. My journey at Living Faith also taught me a lot about prioritizing, leadership and time management. Things which I am still learning and growing in, but I have confidence that through Him, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. It was also at Living Faith that I was shown what purpose is. One thing that the Holy Spirit had continually shown me is that as a Church we have all been called by God to follow Him and go make disciples. Therefore, we all share in the same purpose, our purpose for us all as individuals is to glorify Him.

After I graduated from Living Faith in May of 2014, my time at Living Faith came to a close. We said "see you later" to a community that we called home and hold much love and gratitude for. We moved back to Edmonton, AB. Prior to moving, throughout my fourth year, we knew that without a doubt we were called back to Edmonton. Although, I had other plans, which did not include the city. I learned that when the Lord has ordered your steps that it would be best to follow his direction. There was one church, that the Lord had placed on my heart which was Crossroads Christian Assembly. I had never been to the church, never met the Pastor or any of the congregation. Yet, I knew that was where the Lord had called me to settle. After about a month of living in the city, I found the courage to go. It was on a Wednesday morning, I walked through the door and introduced myself to Pastor Steve Lagore. I asked him if I could complete my internship with the church body and the rest is history. Through much prayer and courting within two months, the logistical planning had been processed and approved. I started my six month internship in September and as it drew to a conclusion in February of 2015, I was installed as Pastor of Family Ministries.

My personal objective while posted at Crossroads was to support Pastor Steve Lagore in the transition of leaving for four months to go on Sabbatical, which took place from April to July of 2016. It was when he began his Sabbatical, I felt that my time at Crossroads was coming to a close. In my heart, I sensed that if this was the Lord's will He would have to confirm this to me and on November 19th, 2016 the confirmation came. I am currently in the place where I am ready to go wherever the Lord may lead us, which is why I have written a letter to you. My heart is to discover where we are to settle next.

My personal desire is to be able to connect with people. To encourage and teach them about the love of God. My hope is to be able to relate, empathize and identify with youth and young adults in wherever they may be in their life's journey. I hope to walk alongside and not to walk above. To bring light into their lives through conveying God's love who is filled with grace and mercy; forgiveness and strength; peace and comfort. My desire is to breathe out direction and guidance, without instilling condemnation and hopelessness. Ministry should carry two attributes. The first is establishing a bridge for the people to feel connected with the Body of Christ. The moment they have accepted Christ they were grafted into the Kingdom of God. Therefore, teaching that they have a purpose and a specific function is important for the vitality of the church as a whole. Secondly engaging with community outside the church is equally as important. We have been called to be a light of the world and part of that means engaging the community and being intentional with the Gospel.