

Shane Farmer

MINISTRY BACKGROUND

Shane experienced God's call into ministry in Junior High. As an 18 year-old senior in High School he reaffirmed that call and gave specific guidance to follow Him one step at a time. Shortly after this Shane began to envision leading a church as a senior pastor. Many times he wanted to pursue that vision, put down roots, and set out to spend a lifetime reaching a community. God has faithfully shown him the step he had for him in each movement along his journey.

Willow Creek Community Church, Barrington, IL

2010-2013

Director of Discipleship

- Taught at Midweek and Weekend services.
- Developed new strategies to rebuild many key values and initiatives that had fallen into ineffectiveness for over a decade, including a strategy for community life, volunteerism, membership, midweek, classes and overall church growth.
- Within two years, implemented a cutting edge medium sized group approach to connections by planting these communities in every section of the auditorium.
- Rebuilt a team, hiring over 70 new staff within two years.
- Within a year and a half, grew small groups from only 300 to over 1000, and on trend to be over two thousand by the end of 2013.
- Redesigned a series of introductory classes to the church.
- Won a Telly Award for creative video and growing membership by over 600 persons.
- Developed a course to help congregants Discover Their Wiring that catapulted new levels of volunteerism in the congregation.
- Redesigned and rewrote the membership process to restore the vitality of Willow Creek's membership.
- Turned a failing midweek service around, growing by 30% in the first year.
- Implemented an approach to making a Big Church Feel Small through section communities that produced double-digit percentage growth in every active section community.
- Produced one of the single greatest staff engagement gains in the church's history in the first year by taking the 3rd lowest staff engagement department into the top tier in only 9 months.
- Participated and led on the Senior Executive team at Willow Creek to determine Human Resource policies, budget allocations, compassion and justice initiatives, programming, production and all operational aspects of the church.
- Received personal coaching and mentoring from Senior Pastor Bill Hybels.

Willow Creek Community Church, Barrington, IL

2006-2010

Director of Student Impact

- Led a team of ten staff members into a season of phenomenal growth in depth and outreach.
- Ministry grew from seven hundred students to eleven hundred students. Taught 35 messages a year.
- Doubled the volunteer army of House Group and Small Group Leaders.
- Led and organized two multi-day camps a year with 1200 to 1500 students. Developed a 4-year scope and sequence for group curriculum.
- Tripled the levels of personal biblical engagement amongst students.

- During this time, Willow began measuring staff engagement amongst all departments in order to assess health, buy-in, ownership and satisfaction of staff. Outside of the senior executive team Student Impact was awarded the #1 highest level of staff engagement and satisfaction two of three years under his leadership and ranked #2 the other year.

Willow Creek Community Church, Barrington, IL

2004-2006

3-year full-time intern in Axis

- Worked as a volunteer intern in the 20-something ministry of Willow Creek Community Church.
- Planted medium-sized communities and missional communities that reached those far from God and taught young people how to form life-changing small group communities.
- Developed a teaching course known as Axis Elements that instilled the fundamentals of Christian faith into Axis as their first step towards growth, connection and involvement.
- Experienced a three-year intense personal journey of inner transformation while being mentored by the two most gifted spiritual guides and directors at Willow Creek.
- Learned about emotionally healthy spirituality, the false self, freedom from the past, the ministry of presence, and other tools, he believes have set him up for a lifetime of character logically sound and healthy ministry.

First Baptist Church, Hydro, Ok

2001-2004

Student Minister

During Shane's years in college he accepted his first staff assignment to lead sixth through twelfth grade students at a small church of one hundred people. Beginning with 8 students his wife and he watched God work through their efforts to grow a youth group to over 80 students.

EDUCATION/CREDENTIALS

Bethel Seminary, St. Paul, MN

2004-2007

M.A. in Transformational Leadership

Studied Biblical Studies, Systematic Theology, Leadership and Spiritual Formation classes in coordination with the 3-year internship program of Willow Creek.

Southwestern Oklahoma State University

2001-2003

Oklahoma Baptist University

1999-2001

B.A. in Communications - Graduated Summa Cum Laude (4.0 GPA)

Received titles for #1 in Persuasive Speaking, Best Actor of the Year, #1 in Debate - Irene Ryan Nomination for exceptional acting. Played lead role in play that won state competition.

President of Freshmen Families Ministry for the Baptist Collegiate Ministries. Worked on staff at a nearby church during this period of time.