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# JOHN H. SPURLING

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15401 Chenal Pkwy. Little Rock, AR 72211  
817.475.5753 johnspurling4@gmail.com

## Ministry Summary

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I am a seasoned ministry leader with a deep passion for helping people grow into maturity in Jesus Christ and find their place in the life of the church. My heart is to build healthy, life-giving ministries dedicated to making disciples, investing in children and families, providing meaningful opportunities to serve, and cultivating authentic, Christ-centered community. I love developing leaders and building teams, creating environments where people are known, cared for, and encouraged to take meaningful next steps in their faith—moving beyond attendance to true belonging, spiritual growth, and life transformation.

## Leadership Experience

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### **Executive Pastor, Church Ministries** (August 2023 - January 2026)

#### **Element Church, Wentzville, MO**

- Served as the Executive Pastor for Ministry Development at a large church in the St. Louis area.
- Responsible for all aspects of church ministries including Life Groups, Children’s ministry, Youth ministry, Discipleship, Guest experience, Next Steps/Connect, Team Element (volunteers), etc.
- Expanded Life Groups by 155% to 87 active groups through intentional promotion, leadership recruitment, and ongoing care.
- Built a clear discipleship strategy developed around strong equipping resources and engagement.
- Implemented a six-step volunteer pathway, increasing participation by over 200%, and placing over 360 new volunteers in church ministries annually.
- Launched a New Believers ministry (Fresh Start) with resources, mentors, and follow-up process.
- Served as Director/Academic advisor for Element College, a partner of Southeastern University.

### **Executive Director for Graduate Medical Education** (July 2020 – August 2023)

#### **Mission Community Hospital, Panorama City, CA**

- Created and directed the residency programs for 48 Psychiatry and Primary Care physicians.
- Served as executive director focusing on the educational, administrative, departmental, and marketing challenges.

### **Director of Strategic Leadership & Innovation** (July 2018 – June 2020)

#### **Southeastern University, Lakeland, FL**

- One of the largest and fastest growing Christian universities with over 9,800 students enrolled.
- Developed a new Regional Executive Master’s Program in leadership that launched in several locations around the country and doubled the program enrollment from 80 to 162 pastors/leaders.
- Created multiple strategically aligned, innovative, educational projects to advance quality leader development within various churches.
- Taught several Ministry Leadership classes at undergraduate and graduate level.

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## **Associate Senior Pastor/Discipleship & Ministry Development** (January 2005 to June 2017) **Gateway Church, Southlake, TX**

- Served on the Senior Leadership Team, influencing strategic planning, all aspects of church ministries, staff leadership development, and strengthening a culture of biblical community.
- Developed and led a church-wide volunteer strategy and training process that equipped and mobilized over 10,400 members into serving roles, including hundreds of small group leaders.
- Designed and developed all equipping and spiritual formation ministries within six growth tracks and over 9,800 church participants annually.
- Developed and implemented leadership training for pastoral staff across seven Metroplex campuses.

## **President, Professor of Pastoral Leadership** (March 2012 to July 2017) **The King's University, Southlake, TX**

- Increased overall university enrollment by 255% with a total of 867 ministry focused students.
- Effectively identified, hired, and lead a healthy staff of over 100 employees.
- Recognized as a "Top 15 Online Education Program" for private Christian universities.
- Engaged in building significant relationships with local and state officials, community leaders, key business executives, prospective donors, and pastors/churches.

## **Additional Leadership Positions:**

### **Senior Pastor** (2001 – 2004)

**First Assembly, Colleyville, TX**

- Led congregation of 750 people with a full time-staff of 12.

### **Chair of Practical Theology Dept. / Prof. of Leadership & Church Health** (1997 – 2001) **AGTS, Springfield, MO**

### **Senior Pastor, Harvest Chapel, Yorkville, IL** (1994 – 1997)

## **Education**

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### **Doctor of Ministry – Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA**

*(Program Focus: Church Leadership: Discipleship, Equipping, and Small Groups)*

### **Master of Divinity - AGTS, Springfield, MO**

*(Graduated with academic honors)*

### **M.A. program in Strategic Leadership - Vanguard University, Costa Mesa, CA**

### **B.A. in Biblical Studies - Evangel University, Springfield, MO**

*(Graduated cum laude)*

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## Student/Athlete Career

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### Evangel University

- Lettered in Football (4 Years).
- President's Award winner (Given to student athlete with highest GPA).
- Inducted into Evangel University Hall of Fame (2024).

## Personality Profiles

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### StrengthsFinder 2.0 Top 5 Signature Themes:

- Learner, Achiever, Strategic, Relator, Belief

## Digital Portfolio

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**NOTE:** To view a small collection of speaking samples please visit my digital page at:  
[docjohnspurling.com](http://docjohnspurling.com)

## References

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*Available upon request*