

Reverend Dr. Deven MacDonald

Personal

Let me start with the big picture: I love Jesus, I love his Church, and I love his Word. I don't know how else to introduce myself than that. I fully believe that my primary calling is to preach the Word and shepherd God's people. Sure, the leadership, vision, and strategy parts are important, and by God's grace, I can do that, and am eager to grow more in these areas. But I know my calling. It's not to build my brand or my name, but to proclaim the name of the resurrected Lord and care for his people. I love to study the Bible and help people understand how the Good News of Jesus impacts their everyday lives.

My greatest passion as a pastor is to make known the glory of God revealed in Jesus Christ. *By God's grace*, I have a proven track record of faithfully, clearly, and effectively proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ. My ministry will always follow an initiative approach to discipleship. I work to embed myself in my church community, inviting people into my life to know my wife and me and grow alongside us. We need to be a part of a healthy church to continue to grow in our own faith.

I love to build high-functioning staff teams that maintain a level of excellence and a culture that reflects the grace, joy, and love found in the gospel. I am a natural leader who has a vision for the future and the ability to take steps in realizing that vision. I really enjoy learning, writing, and reading great books.

Family



My wife, Heather, and I were married in 2006. Separate from receiving God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ, my relationship with Heather has been the highest joy in my life as we partner together for the furtherance of God's Kingdom. Heather is my favorite person in the world. I always joke that she's the most popular person in our house! Together, we have three children, whom we see as true gifts from God!

After waiting 8 years for children, God graciously provided a child for us through adoption (Patrick). Soon after adopting, we welcomed two more biological children (Evelyn and Audrey). After waiting for nearly ten years to start our family, we understand well the

Psalmist's words about children being a "blessing from the Lord" (Psalm 137).

In all that we do, our greatest desire is to see our children grow in their faith and honor God with their lives. To this end, we are committed to regular family worship, creating a culture of grace in our home, and pointing their hearts to the grace and beauty of the gospel.

Why Berean?

About one year ago, God began to place a restlessness in our hearts about our future. Everything was going well in our ministry and lives, so this took us by surprise. We started to talk with some mentors and older, wiser leaders in our lives. In this process, it became clear that God was in fact leading us into something new.

We wanted to find a church in which we would fit and where we could grow. I also wanted to find a ministry context in which I could help make a difference. I am committed to a high view of Scripture, so I knew I needed to find a church that held fast to God's Word. After coming across Berean's job posting, reviewing your doctrinal statement, and watching some services, it seemed like a fit. We sent in an initial résumé and left it with the Lord.

Once we began having interviews, filling out questionnaires about ministry and theology, and began watching services more closely online – if I'm honest – our excitement began to grow. For me, this is more than a job. Whatever church we went to was going to be the church that my family would be in – where my kids would grow up. I wanted to find a place where the Bible was the authority and where Jesus was unapologetically worshipped and proclaimed.

What do I believe?

I wouldn't be exploring this position at Berean if I wasn't in agreement with the church's theology. I've read the doctrinal statement, asked a lot of questions, and have confidence that my personal views and those of Berean align. Let me just hit a few items that may be of interest to you:

- **I believe in substitutionary atonement.** This refers to the sacrificial and atoning death of Christ in the place of sinners. I believe in a penal substitutionary atonement – meaning Jesus died to take the full punishment that I deserved on himself. We are guilty before God, and we are condemned. What we need is a substitute to stand in our place, pay our debt, and praise God. This is exactly what Jesus did (Mark 10:45; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24).
- **I believe that Christianity is distinct.** I believe Christianity is not simply a moral paradigm that we are required to follow (love your neighbor; do to others as you'd have them do to you; be kind; etc.), and then you will earn salvation. Sure, Christianity has those moral commands, but the distinction is that Christians do not obey to earn grace. The Bible teaches that because we could never earn salvation, Jesus accomplished it for us. We are not saved by our works, but by trusting the finished work of Christ on the cross (Ephesians 2:8-9). Jesus and Jesus alone said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through me" (John 14:6).
- **I believe that the Bible is infallible and authoritative.** This means that the Bible does not contain errors, it is true in all that it asserts, and it is our absolute authority in all matters of faith and practice. How I respond to skeptics or critics of the Bible depends on where they are coming from. I have met pastors or Christian leaders who are all too ready to ignore, minimize, or explain away specific Scriptural truths (conveniently, these are almost always the exact areas that our broader culture wants Christians to abandon). I've met so many who call themselves "red-letter Christians," and in my opinion, they completely miss the Apostolic authority, granted by Jesus, to those who wrote

Scripture. To these individuals, I challenge them as God gives opportunity. If Jesus truly is Lord, then his Word must be our authority. You can't pick and choose with the Bible. You can't have, for example, Jesus without Paul. I trust the Apostles to better understand the heart of Jesus' preaching and teaching more than I do the current pastors or theologians who are seeking to make the message of the Bible more palatable for "modern" audiences.

Ministry Experience

Lead Pastor

Summerside Community Church | London, ON 2016 - Present

- Initiated a strategic plan for church planting in our region which successfully launched Chelsea Green Community Church
- Implemented a new vision, mission, and core values of our church
- Created an intentional internship program for young leaders pursuing ministry and guided ministry opportunities with consistent feedback and interaction
- Provided leadership, oversight, and coaching to staff members
- Guided the church through a significant constitutional change in our structure and governance model
- Formulated a church-wide initiative challenging our men to lead well in their homes by beginning or improving family worship at home

Associate Pastor/Co-Pastor

Summerside Community Church | London, ON August 2014 – August 2016

Community Life Pastor

Summerside Community Church | London, ON August 2013 – August 2014

Church Planting Intern

Paxnorth Church | Halifax, NS May 2011 – May 2012

Assistant Pastor

Salem Baptist Church | Sackville, NB May 2008 – August 2010

Education

University of Pretoria | Pretoria, South Africa
Doctor of Philosophy - PhD in New Testament

Acadia University | Nova Scotia, Canada
Master of Arts in Theology

Crandall University | New Brunswick, Canada
Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies (Honors)

Books

The Resurrection and You: How the Resurrection Answers Your Biggest Questions, June 2022. W&S Publishing

Allegiance, Opposition, and Misunderstanding, A Narrative Critical Approach to Mark's Gospel, March 2018. W&S Publishing