

Megachurch Vineyard Pastor Confesses to 'Moral Failure,' in Rehab for Multiple Issues

A megachurch Vineyard pastor in Kansas City was suspended for multiple issues, including addiction, and confessed to a "moral failing" against his wife of more than 30 years.

"Fred [Herron] is suffering from various health issues, including addiction and dependence issues," church leaders told the congregation just before Thanksgiving. "The extent of some of these issues has only come to light in the last seven to 10 days, even to his wife, Janet."

Herron was the senior pastor of Vineyard Church, Kansas City – Northland. The church has four campuses in the Kansas City metropolitan area.

The board of directors says Herron is in an unnamed rehabilitation facility.

According to a church statement:

Fred Herron has personally led many of us to Christ. Many of us are friends of Fred's and love him dearly. This situation changes none of that. We cannot understand this situation except to say that Fred is human. Like all of us, Fred needs the grace of Jesus for healing and forgiveness.

All of us have benefited from Fred's teaching of the gospel. His love for Christ is obvious and abundant. Fred's love for our church, those who serve here and those who have attended is extraordinary. He blessed our church by putting a group of strong men and women that love Jesus in leadership and support roles. These leaders have been developed and trained for their roles and will continue to lead the church during

this time. The pastors and staff will continue to have the day-to-day responsibilities of making things happen here at the Vineyard as they always have.

Executive pastors Roger Sodsod, Tony Wilks and Roger Wilson will jointly assume the church's leadership position with direction and oversight from the Board of Directors. In addition, the leadership of the National Association of Vineyard Churches is providing counsel to the Board of Directors as is a team from PastorServe, an organization which comes alongside churches and church leaders in situations like this. Vineyard Church, and all its leaders, has [been], and will always be about loving and serving Jesus Christ and bringing more people to Him.

The National Association of Vineyard Churches declined to comment at this time.

The church posted the announcement to social media as well. Norm Rasmussen, who is now acting president of the church's board of directors, told the *Kansas City Star* that being transparent with the church body about the scandal was important to the whole leadership team.

"The decision to be open and honest about everything really goes back to our core DNA," he said. "Most of the people that have come to the church have come from a place of brokenness. ... It was a natural extension for us to say we've got someone here that's walked an (errant) pathway and we want to help restore him."

However, Rasmussen declined to detail the nature of Herron's addiction to the *Star*, saying, "When you're in Christ, God does not keep a list of all your sins."

The church statement continues:

There is hope, always hope, in Jesus, no matter the

situation. That's as true now as when Paul wrote that letter to the Romans Jesus is indeed our Lord and He loves us way more than we'll ever know. Let us examine our own hearts and lives and let Jesus heal us all through His living presence. Support and pray for Janet and Fred as they navigate this unforeseen journey. Support our pastors, support each other and support our church family through your continued faithful prayers, serving, reaching and giving. Let this be an opportunity to make our church healthier and draw us closer to Jesus. We believe the best is yet to come.

Biblical, spiritual and emotional support, and prayer will be provided to staff and church members to help process this news and developments. Remember, we are a community that always extends grace to anyone who comes, regardless of position. We as a board are committed to Fred's healing, his wellbeing, and to see him someday walk in freedom with our Lord. We will continue to uphold, pray for, and support Fred as he first overcomes dependency and then restores a right relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ, and then restores right relationship with others.

Also, we will care for and protect Janet, Fred's wife, as she goes through an extremely difficult time. The extended Herron and Favazza families are in our prayers and should be in yours. We love them, and will always, as a church, extend our open arms of grace, mercy, and compassion to them.

Church attendees and members flocked to social media to offer prayers for the fallen pastor.

"Many thoughts and emotions. I ultimately come to 'celebrate' with the heart of God, that one of His has a chance to be restored. As much as it hurts all of us now, imagine how Fred's sins have been troubling God. Praying for Janet, our pastors, our church body, and our community. I love Fred. Praying for recovery and restoration," writes one person.

Another says: "First, Fred I love you and will support you through your healing however long it takes. And we want you back when your ready. Janet you are in my heart. I'm holding you and Fred up in prayer daily along with the rest of Fred's family. The church and staff will also be in my prayers. I believe we are under attack because we are doing so much of God's work. God is in this church and satan hates this. Well I know with all the prayer going out satan Doesn't have a chance. Praise GOD."

Watch the video to see the full announcement.