

OKLAHOMA CHILD WELLBEING

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Jackson Lahmeyer / Sheridan Church Leadership Accountability Review

*Timeline, Public Statement, Biblical Analysis, Governance Standards, Oversight Questions,
and Crisis Communication Review*

Publication Purpose

This document combines the original public timeline and images with the expanded governance, biblical, crisis communication, and oversight analysis requested for the Oklahoma Child Wellbeing research library.

Research & Educational Resource | July 2026

Educational, Legal, and Ownership Disclosures

Educational & Legal Disclosure

This report is provided for research, educational, commentary, documentation, and public-interest purposes. It summarizes publicly reported information, user-provided screenshots, public statements, biblical principles, and nonprofit governance concepts. It is not legal advice, a judicial finding, a criminal allegation, or an independent factual determination. Readers should review original sources and official statements when evaluating any event. Individuals are presumed innocent of criminal wrongdoing unless established through due process.

Ownership Notice

Compiled and formatted by Oklahoma Child Wellbeing. Original news articles, screenshots, names, logos, trademarks, and source materials remain the property of their respective owners and are referenced for commentary, criticism, scholarship, public-interest documentation, and education.

Executive Summary

During June-July 2026, public reporting concerning Sheridan Church Pastor Jackson Lahmeyer progressed from media reports to public admissions, withdrawal from a congressional campaign, and a written statement to the Sheridan Church congregation describing counseling, restoration efforts, gratitude toward the congregation, and plans for continued attendance during a period away from the pulpit.

The public sequence raises broader questions that extend beyond any one individual: leadership accountability, church governance, nonprofit stewardship, public communication, repentance, restoration, victim care, congregational trust, and the integrity of oversight systems. This report is designed as a neutral framework for discussion and institutional learning.

Scope and Methodology

This document combines the original Oklahoma Child Wellbeing timeline and screenshots with expanded analysis in four areas: biblical principles of repentance and restoration; nonprofit governance standards; church accountability models; and crisis communication and external oversight questions. Screenshots are reproduced as documentation of public-facing materials supplied for the report.

Chronological Timeline of Public Events

1. Media outlets publicly reported allegations concerning an extramarital affair.
2. Lahmeyer publicly acknowledged marital unfaithfulness and apologized.
3. He announced suspension of his congressional campaign, citing his family, church, and campaign concerns.
4. Sheridan Church announced a leave of absence while interim leadership continued ministry.
5. His public letter states he is engaged in weekly individual counseling, marriage counseling, guidance from seasoned spiritual leaders, and a period of rest and spiritual renewal.
6. He expressed appreciation for the congregation's support and stated his desire to return as a better Christian, husband, father, and pastor.
7. He reaffirmed Sheridan Church's stated mission: Jesus is the Priority; the Gospel is the Mission; Discipleship is the Purpose.

Original Public Images and Statement Screenshots

Public news coverage screenshot.

News about Daily Mail Jackson Lahmeyer Admits Sexual Affair >



THE OKLAHOMAN  · 13d · on MSN

[Jackson Lahmeyer admits to affair after he drops out of House race](#)

Tulsa pastor Jackson Lahmeyer admits to an affair with a former beauty queen after...



News On 6 · 13d

['I Cheated on My Wife' Former congressional candidate...](#)



THE OKLAHOMAN  · 9d · on MSN

[Jackson Lahmeyer formally quits Republican race for...](#)



Beginning of Jackson Lahmeyer's statement to Sheridan Church.

Dear [Sheridan.Church](#) Family,

Over the last few weeks I have experienced true love, grace, and forgiveness through the embrace of my family and church family. I find myself overwhelmed with emotions from the support that you have extended to me and my family.

I am experiencing what Paul said in *Galatians 6:1*, *"Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently."*

The healing, restoration, and renewal is overwhelming.

My current focus is on ensuring that I am spiritually, emotionally, relationally, and personally healthy. I want you to know that I am in consistent weekly individual counseling, and marriage counseling with Kendra. I am also receiving guidance from seasoned spiritual leaders, and allowing myself time to rest and recover while also continuing to study the Word of God.

My commitment is that I will be a better Christian, a better husband, a better father, and a better pastor than ever before.

Conclusion of Jackson Lahmeyer's statement to Sheridan Church.

pastor than ever before.

In the meantime, until I return to the pulpit, I will continue to be present at every service with you, and I want to thank Dr. Caldwell for leading us during this time. I ask that you continue to keep [Sheridan.Church](#) healthy and strong; continue to gather, continue to serve and continue to love one another. The mission of [Sheridan.Church](#) has always been and will continue to be built upon Jesus Christ and the teaching of the truth from the Word of God, and I truly believe that God's purpose for our church will continue to move forward as we walk together by faith.

Thank you for the love you have shown Kendra, our family and myself. We have felt your prayers and support in ways that are difficult to put into words.

Please continue to pray for our family.

Let's Keep the Main Thing the Main Thing:

Jesus is the Priority.

The Gospel is the Mission.

Discipleship is the Purpose.

Thank you,

Pastor Jackson Lahmeyer

Leadership and Organizational Considerations

Cases involving senior religious leaders often raise questions about governance, conflict-of-interest management, transparency, pastoral restoration processes, protection of affected families, communication with congregants, and maintaining public trust. Organizations frequently seek to balance grace, repentance, accountability, and responsible oversight.

Biblical Analysis of Repentance, Restoration, and Leadership Accountability

Educational Note

This section presents biblical principles Christians commonly consider when evaluating repentance, restoration, forgiveness, and leadership accountability. It is theological analysis, not a judgment regarding any particular individual or church.

Biblical Foundations of Repentance

The Greek word often translated as repentance is *metanoia*, meaning a change of mind that results in a change of direction. Biblical repentance is more than regret; it includes acknowledging sin, turning away from it, and seeking reconciliation with God and, where possible, with those harmed.

Key Scripture

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." - 1 John 1:9 (NIV)

"Produce fruit in keeping with repentance." - Matthew 3:8 (NIV)

- Honest confession
- Acceptance of responsibility
- Turning away from sinful behavior
- Seeking reconciliation
- Demonstrating lasting change

Forgiveness and Consequences

One important biblical distinction is that forgiveness does not necessarily eliminate earthly consequences. King David provides a central example. After his sin involving Bathsheba and Uriah, David confessed. Nathan declared that the Lord had taken away his sin, yet David still experienced significant family and kingdom consequences (2 Samuel 12-18). Forgiveness restores relationship with God; consequences may remain part of earthly accountability.

Restoration in Scripture

Galatians 6:1

"Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted." - Galatians 6:1 (NIV)

This passage emphasizes gentleness, humility, spiritual maturity, accountability, and self-awareness. Restoration is portrayed as a careful spiritual process rather than an automatic or immediate return to previous responsibilities.

Leadership Carries Higher Responsibility

Scripture consistently teaches that those entrusted with teaching and leadership are held to a higher standard because their influence affects many people. James warns that teachers will be judged more strictly (James 3:1). Paul instructs that overseers must be above reproach and demonstrate character, self-control, good reputation, and the ability to lead their households well (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).

Restoration Does Not Always Mean Immediate Return to Leadership

The New Testament encourages forgiveness and restoration, but it does not require every restored believer to immediately resume prior leadership authority. Paul warns Timothy not to be hasty in the laying on of hands (1 Timothy 5:22). Many Christian traditions interpret this as a call for discernment, time, accountability, and visible fruit before leadership restoration.

Public Sin and Public Accountability

Matthew 18:15-17 begins with private correction and reconciliation, but situations involving public leadership or public misconduct often require broader communication because the impact extends to the community. Paul also instructs that elders who continue in sin are to be corrected publicly so others may take warning (1 Timothy 5:20).

Repentance Is Measured Over Time

Jesus taught that a tree is known by its fruit (Matthew 7:17-20). Biblically, lasting transformation is evaluated through consistent conduct over time, not simply a single apology, announcement, or emotional moment.

Balancing Grace and Accountability

Grace and accountability are not competing biblical values. Jesus extended forgiveness while also calling people toward changed lives. In John 8:11, He told the woman caught in adultery, "Neither do I condemn you... Go now and leave your life of sin." Grace addressed her dignity; accountability addressed future conduct.

Nonprofit Governance Standards

Introduction

Churches and religious organizations occupy a unique position within the nonprofit sector. While churches enjoy broad constitutional protections regarding doctrine and governance, they also carry fiduciary, ethical, and stewardship responsibilities to members, donors, employees, volunteers, and the communities they serve.

Good governance is intended to protect individuals, congregations, ministry leadership, financial integrity, public trust, and organizational sustainability. Although governance models vary among denominations, nonprofit management literature consistently identifies several foundational principles.

Core Governance Principles

Accountability

Effective nonprofit organizations establish systems in which leaders remain accountable to governing bodies rather than operating without oversight. Accountability includes board oversight, financial transparency, independent review, ethical reporting, and documented decision-making.

Transparency

Transparency promotes confidence by helping stakeholders understand leadership decisions, organizational policies, financial stewardship, and conflict resolution procedures. Transparency does not require public disclosure of confidential counseling or private pastoral care, but it does support openness regarding institutional processes.

Fiduciary Responsibility

Board members generally owe three primary fiduciary duties: duty of care, duty of loyalty, and duty of obedience. Leaders should make informed decisions, avoid placing personal interests above organizational interests, and operate consistently with the organization's stated mission and governing documents.

Church Accountability Models

Congregational Model

Authority primarily rests with local church members. Strengths include local control and democratic participation. Challenges may include limited outside review and the risk that conflicts become internalized.

Elder-Led Model

Authority rests with a plurality of elders. Strengths include shared leadership and a biblical emphasis on multiple leaders. Challenges arise when elders are not sufficiently independent or when relationships compromise oversight.

Denominational Oversight

Regional or national organizations provide supervision. Strengths include external review, appeals processes, and established disciplinary procedures. Challenges include variable responsiveness and organizational complexity.

Independent Church Model

Independent churches often have significant autonomy. Advantages include flexibility and rapid decision-making. Potential challenges include limited external accountability, concentration of authority, and greater reliance on internal governance practices.

External Oversight, Reporting Agencies, and Accountability Questions

Churches remain subject to applicable civil, criminal, employment, tax, nonprofit, and child protection laws. Depending on the concern involved, multiple governmental or independent bodies may have oversight or investigative authority. The existence of an oversight body does not imply wrongdoing; it provides a mechanism for review when appropriate.

Oversight Body	Potential Role	Review Questions
Local Law Enforcement	Criminal investigations, threats, harassment, assault, fraud, theft.	Were allegations reported? Were victims informed of resources? Were mandatory reporting duties satisfied?
District Attorney	Criminal prosecution, charging decisions, victim protection.	Does evidence support charges? Were conflicts of interest evaluated? Were witnesses protected?
State Attorney General	Charity oversight, consumer protection, fraud, public integrity depending on state law.	Were charitable assets used appropriately? Were donor funds used for organizational purposes?
Internal Revenue Service	Tax-exempt compliance, private inurement, excess benefit transactions, political campaign activity limits.	Were charitable resources used appropriately? Was compensation documented? Were conflicts disclosed?
State Charity Regulators	Charitable solicitation, nonprofit registration, financial reporting, governance review.	Were required filings made? Were solicitations accurate?
Child Protective Services	Child safety, abuse or neglect reports, mandatory reporting investigations.	Were concerns involving minors reported promptly? Were children protected?
Adult Protective Services	Abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation involving vulnerable adults.	Were vulnerable adults protected and reports made as required?
Professional Licensing Boards	Ethics review for counselors, social workers, therapists, psychologists, or other licensed professionals.	Were boundaries, confidentiality, and professional ethics followed?
EEOC / Department of Labor	Discrimination, harassment, retaliation, wage compliance,	Were employees protected from retaliation or unlawful employment

	workplace protections.	practices?
Civil Courts	Defamation, negligence, breach of fiduciary duty, contracts, personal injury.	What civil remedies, defenses, or due process protections apply?

Independent Accountability Organizations

- Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA): voluntary standards related to financial integrity, governance, stewardship, transparency, and board independence.
- BoardSource: nonprofit governance guidance emphasizing board oversight, fiduciary duties, board evaluation, and ethical leadership.
- National Council of Nonprofits: governance resources concerning board responsibilities, financial oversight, transparency, and accountability.
- Independent Sector: principles for good governance and ethical practice across the nonprofit sector.

Governance Review Questions

- Who exercises oversight over senior leadership?
- Is authority concentrated in one individual or distributed through accountable structures?
- Are independent directors, elders, trustees, or outside reviewers involved?
- Are annual financial reviews or audits conducted when appropriate?
- Are compensation decisions independently reviewed and documented?
- Is there a written code of ethics?
- Are conflicts of interest disclosed and managed?
- Is there a confidential reporting process?
- Are whistleblowers protected from retaliation?
- Who conducts investigations, and are outside investigators used when appropriate?
- What objective standards determine readiness for restoration?
- How are congregants and donors informed while protecting legitimate confidentiality?

Oklahoma Child Wellbeing Institutional Accountability Questions

- Were vulnerable individuals protected?
- Were concerns documented?
- Were reports made promptly?
- Were mandatory reporting laws followed?
- Were independent experts consulted when appropriate?
- Were retaliation concerns addressed?
- Were whistleblowers protected?
- Were organizational policies followed consistently?
- Were corrective actions documented?
- Were lessons learned incorporated into future policy?

Crisis Communication Analysis

Research and organizational practice consistently show that crisis response significantly affects long-term public trust. Organizations preserve credibility when they respond promptly, acknowledge the situation, demonstrate empathy, explain next steps, maintain consistency, and document corrective action.

- Respond promptly: delayed communication increases speculation and mistrust.
- Acknowledge the situation: ignoring publicly known events often damages credibility.

- Demonstrate empathy: affected individuals and congregants should not be treated as public-relations obstacles.
- Explain next steps: stakeholders need to know how the organization will address interim leadership, counseling resources, governance review, and future communication.
- Maintain consistency: conflicting statements from leaders can undermine trust.
- Document corrective action: future credibility depends on what changes, not only what is said.

Leadership Ethics Research

Leadership ethics literature emphasizes that influence carries corresponding responsibility. Competence alone is insufficient. Ethical leadership requires integrity, humility, honesty, consistency, stewardship, transparency, and accountability.

Trust is difficult to earn and easy to lose. Organizations most effectively recover trust when they demonstrate honesty, transparency, accountability, meaningful corrective action, and ongoing evaluation. Personal forgiveness and organizational readiness for leadership restoration are related but not identical.

Restoration Considerations

- Acknowledgement of misconduct
- Acceptance of responsibility
- Appropriate counseling or pastoral care
- Demonstrated behavioral change
- Accountability to independent or mature leaders
- Sufficient time for observable fruit
- Evaluation by independent leaders when appropriate

Organizational Lessons

Organizations facing leadership crises benefit from asking whether governance policies were in place before the crisis, whether meaningful accountability existed, whether conflicts of interest were addressed, how affected individuals were supported, whether communication was timely and accurate, and what safeguards should be strengthened moving forward.

Best Practices for Faith-Based Organizations

- Independent governing boards or oversight bodies
- Written ethics policies and conflict-of-interest disclosures
- Confidential reporting channels and whistleblower protections
- Financial transparency and independent review
- Leadership evaluations and succession planning
- Crisis communication plans
- Trauma-informed responses for affected individuals
- Professional counseling and referral resources
- Regular governance training
- Clear restoration standards and documented decision-making

Discussion Questions

8. What distinguishes biblical repentance from public apology?
9. How should churches balance grace with accountability when leaders fail?
10. What role should time and demonstrated change play in restoration?

11. How can church governance protect both individuals and congregations?
12. What does Scripture teach about the responsibilities of public spiritual leaders?
13. What governance practices most effectively strengthen public trust?
14. When should independent oversight be used?
15. How should organizations communicate with members during a crisis?

Selected References and Source Notes

- The Holy Bible, New International Version (NIV): Matthew 3:8; Matthew 7:17-20; Matthew 18:15-17; John 8:11; 2 Samuel 12; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 1 Timothy 5:20-22; Titus 1:5-9; James 3:1; Galatians 6:1; 1 John 1:9.
- BoardSource. Leading with Intent: BoardSource Index of Nonprofit Board Practices.
- Independent Sector. Principles for Good Governance and Ethical Practice.
- National Council of Nonprofits. Board Roles and Responsibilities; Governance Resources.
- Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA). Standards of Responsible Stewardship.
- Public reporting screenshots supplied in Appendix A, including The Oklahoman and News On 6 references visible in the captured search/news image.
- Public statement screenshots supplied in Appendix A and reproduced in this report for documentation and educational commentary.

Appendix A: Public Images Included in This Report

Appendix Image 1: Public news coverage screenshot.



Appendix Image 2: Beginning of public statement.

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Appendix Image 3: Conclusion of public statement.

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