

Meet the Team:



Dr. Stephen Phinney | Founder & Chairman

Stephen is married to Jane. They have three grown daughters, Abigail, Elizabeth, and Jessica. They are blessed with eleven grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Both have been actively involved in ministry for 45+ years. Stephen and Jane reside in Sterling, Kansas.

The Phinneys started IOM America under the name of “Release Ministries” in 1986, changing its name to IOM America in 2001. While Dr. Phinney does not put much stock in degrees, he holds a bachelor's degree in psychology, a master's degree in counseling psychology, and a doctoral degree in Cross-cultural Affairs & Leadership. Institutions attended are Colorado Christian University, Patriot Graduate School, Oxford Graduate School, and Phoenix University of Theology.

Dr. Phinney is the Founder of IOM America, Identity Matters Worldview Institute, and the IM Online School. He is the author of multiple books that focus on Christ, Culture, & Creator - all centered on the believer's identity in Christ. IOM America publishes online articles & media through multiple venues. His full story [HERE](#).



Gregory Jones | Vice Chairman

Gregory Jones (Greg) serves as the Vice Chairman of IOM America, bringing over three decades of trusted friendship, strategic insight, and spiritual partnership alongside Founder and President, Dr. Stephen R. Phinney. A qualified and discerning leader, Mr. Jones deeply understands the prophetic mission and theological foundation of IOM America—anchored in advancing the indwelling life of Christ and preparing the Church for the End Times.

With seasoned expertise in corporate management and media outreach, Gregory has played an instrumental role in expanding the ministry's reach across generational and digital landscapes. His vision bridges high-level administrative stewardship with creative expression, enabling IOM America to communicate timeless biblical truths through modern formats that resonate with today's culture.

A ministry leader of integrity and influence, Greg consistently embodies the servant-hearted leadership modeled by Christ—guiding teams, shaping strategy, and speaking truth with clarity. His contributions fortify the organization's mission to equip believers through sound doctrine, prophetic engagement, and Christ-centered transformation.

Greg's life and work reflect a rare blend of corporate acumen and spiritual depth, making him not only a vital pillar in IOM America's governance but also a trusted voice in the ministry's ongoing legacy.



Gale Ethridge | Memorial Member

Gale Ethridge faithfully served as the Board Treasurer of IOM America, bringing over forty years of active ministry experience rooted in biblical wisdom, integrity, and a steadfast commitment to the life of Christ. As a devoted farmer in the heartlands of Kansas, Gale embodied the patient resilience and grounded stewardship that uniquely enriched the leadership team of IOM America.

In August of 2025, Gale stepped over into eternity. His memory and the honor of his service shall remain a part of IOM America.



Dr. Thomas Ryan | Board Secretary

Dr. Thomas Ryan (Tom) serves as the Board Secretary of IOM America, bringing a rare combination of theological depth, executive experience, and longstanding friendship to the ministry's leadership team. Born in Youngstown, Ohio, Dr. Ryan's academic journey reflects both intellectual rigor and spiritual devotion. He earned his Bachelor of Arts from Ohio University, an MBA from Indiana University, and later a

Doctor of Ministry from Phoenix University of Theology—where he graduated alongside his trusted friend and ministry colleague, Dr. Stephen R. Phinney.

With credentials as a Certified Public Accountant through Ernst & Young and decades of leadership as Chief Financial Officer for several organizations, Dr. Ryan is known for his precision, governance expertise, and discernment in organizational strategy. His ability to integrate financial stewardship with spiritual calling has made him an invaluable asset to both corporate and ministry environments.

Currently serving as a professor at Grand Canyon University, Dr. Ryan continues to invest in the next generation—mentoring students in business and leadership with a biblical worldview. His faithful friendship with Dr. Phinney and deep understanding of IOM America's prophetic mission enriches every board discussion, decision, and prayerful pursuit.

Dr. Ryan's life stands as a testimony to wise counsel, academic excellence, and Christ-centered loyalty, making him a trusted pillar in shaping both the legacy and the future of IOM America.



Dr. E.C. Gaffney | General IOM Board Member

Dr. E.C. Gaffney serves on the Board of IOM America with over four decades of enduring ministry leadership marked by clarity, conviction, and Christ-centered excellence. A graduate of Grace Fellowship International, he shared his theological formation and spiritual commissioning with Dr. Stephen R. Phinney nearly forty years ago—a bond that continues to strengthen IOM America's prophetic mission

today.

Throughout his ministry career, Dr. Gaffney has championed the equipping of disciples through diverse avenues, including radio broadcasting, church leadership, ministry management, and leadership mentorship. His voice—both literally and figuratively—has been a steady guide for believers seeking spiritual maturity and biblical grounding in a culture of compromise.

Based in Denver, Colorado, Dr. Gaffney leads a successful business founded upon the same values that have shaped his ministry: integrity, stewardship, and redemptive impact. His entrepreneurial insight blends seamlessly with his spiritual acumen, making him a key contributor to the strategic and operational health of IOM America.

Dr. Gaffney is a great asset to the ministry—not only for his experience and wisdom, but also for the loyalty and friendship he has cultivated with the Phinneys over the decades. His presence on the board brings a balance of humility, insight, and prophetic awareness, all aimed at fortifying the Church in the indwelling life of Christ.



Wendell Smock | IOM Board Member

Wendell Smock brings over 30 years of trusted friendship and spiritual camaraderie with Dr. Phinney to his role as Board Member of IOM America. Known for his steadfast integrity and quiet wisdom, Wendell serves as a powerful advisor to the ministry, often drawing from decades of life experience, discernment, and biblical conviction.

Professionally, Wendell is a renowned piano tuner whose expert craftsmanship has served some of the top musicians and performers across America. His keen ear and dedication to excellence have earned him respect in both classical and contemporary music circles—yet his humility keeps him grounded in a mission far greater than fame.

In addition to his vocational achievements, Wendell has faithfully served with The Gideons International for decades, helping place the Word of God in the hands of countless souls across the nation. His passion for Scripture aligns seamlessly with the heart and mission of IOM America, where he has stood beside the ministry for many years—offering counsel, encouragement, and unwavering support.

Wendell is a great asset to the IOM team. His presence on the board reflects not only his personal commitment to the indwelling life of Christ, but also the depth of legacy that comes from walking together in faith for over three decades. A man of quiet strength and prophetic insight, Wendell embodies the servant-hearted leadership that defines IOM's mission.



Michael James West | IOM Board Member

Michael West (Mike) stands as a pillar of wisdom, integrity, and spiritual insight within the leadership framework of IOM America. For over thirty years, he has walked closely with Dr. Stephen R. Phinney—not only as a treasured friend, but as one of his most trusted spiritual advisors. His counsel has been pivotal in guiding the ministry through seasons of growth, challenge, and prophetic clarity.

Michael's roots trace back to one of America's most influential corporate families, a legacy of enterprise and stewardship that shaped his own calling toward excellence. He received his formal training in Business Administration from Arizona State University, where he honed the strategic thinking and organizational acumen that would later become essential to both marketplace and ministry service.

Professionally, Michael brings a legacy of corporate leadership marked by discernment and diligence. But it is his fusion of business insight and spiritual depth that makes him irreplaceable to the IOM Board. His ability to speak into both the structural and prophetic dimensions of the ministry has helped ensure that IOM remains aligned—practically and spiritually—with its mission to equip the Church in the indwelling life of Yeshua.

His influence within IOM America is deeply personal and profoundly impactful. With unwavering loyalty, Michael continues to anchor the ministry through friendship, faith, and a bold commitment to Kingdom vision.



Dean Leto | IOM Board Member

Dean Leto serves as a foundational voice of clarity, conviction, and friendship within the leadership of IOM America. As a lifelong companion and trusted spiritual advisor to Dr. Phinney, Dean's presence on the board is woven from more than twenty years of shared ministry, prophetic insight, and personal faithfulness.

Known for his deep understanding of biblical eschatology, Dean has walked alongside IOM America through the unfolding of its mission to equip the Church with Hebraic clarity and End Times preparation. His theological discernment, especially in the realm of prophecy, has helped sharpen the ministry's direction and affirm its spiritual compass—often bringing common sense wisdom to complex issues.

Outside of ministry, Dean is a successful businessman who leads his industry with quiet strength and unwavering values. His reputation for faith-driven leadership, compassion toward others, and unshakable integrity sets him apart—not just as a professional, but as a Kingdom-minded steward in the marketplace.

Dean has become a pillar of support to Dr. Phinney personally, spiritually, and organizationally. His loyalty, insight, and friendship embody the kind of covenant relationship that IOM America seeks to model—where truth, grace, and shared vision fuel enduring impact.



Pastor Joel Grizzle | IOM Board Member

Pastor Joel Grizzle is the pastor of First Baptist Church of Lyon, Kansas. He graduated from Dallas Theological Seminary.

Pastor Joel Grizzle serves on the IOM America Board of Directors with unwavering faith, wisdom, and pastoral integrity. His presence has been more than a guiding voice—it has been a stabilizing force rooted in the Word of God and seasoned with discernment. As both a board member and spiritual shepherd, Pastor Joel consistently brings clarity to complex decisions, compassion to difficult moments, and a prophetic steadiness that helped anchor the ministry’s direction. His counsel is never merely strategic—it was deeply spiritual, always pointing us back to Christ as our source and center.

Beyond his formal role, Pastor Joel has been a cherished friend and pastor to Dr. Phinney, walking alongside him through seasons of vision, warfare, and breakthrough. Their bond has exemplified the kind of generational honor and spiritual brotherhood that IOM America seeks to cultivate across the Body of Christ. Pastor Joel’s legacy within this ministry is etched not only in boardroom decisions but in the hearts of those he has prayed for, encouraged, and equipped. We honor his years of faithful service and thank the Lord for the enduring impact of his life and leadership.

HONORARY BOARD MEMBERS:

Rick Kratz: Rick Kratz, a retired Certified Public Accountant, has been a trusted friend and fellow mentor of Dr. Stephen Phinney for over 30 years. His dedication and support have been instrumental since the founding of IOM America, serving on the Board of Directors multiple times. Rick's close relationship with the Phinney family has fostered a deep bond of trust and collaboration, reinforcing the mission and vision of IOM America with his financial acumen and unwavering commitment to the transformative power of Christ.

Judge Mark T. Boonstra: Some might know that Mark is Dr. Phinney’s co-writer for the Identity Politics Series.

Judge Boonstra is the author of a 3-volume publication, *“In Their Own Words: Today’s Godless America,”* which we encourage you to read. He serves as a judge on the Michigan Court of Appeals. He was blessed with IOM America’s prestigious 2024 *Compassion in Action Award*. His wife, Martha, is blessed to be the granddaughter of Congressman Lois C. Rabaut, who authored the *“Under God”* amendment to the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mark Maulding: Mark Maulding is the President and Founder of Grace Life International. He has a Master’s of Divinity from Southwestern Seminary and an undergraduate degree from the University of Georgia. While serving as a church pastor for 10 years, Mark hit a wall trying to do all the things he believed God wanted him to do. He almost burned out on

Christianity until God revealed the life-giving power of His grace, also known as the New Covenant. This transformation led Mark to launch Grace Life International in 1995 as a ministry to help others discover the same freedom and joy.

Mark teaches at conferences and preaches at churches across the United States as well as internationally. He is the author of the book, *God's Best-Kept Secret*. Mark is married to his sweetheart, Ellen, and they have four adult children, including one with special needs. Mark is a rabid Georgia Bulldog football fan and fitness enthusiast during his downtime.

Mark also serves as Dr. Phinney's primary leadership coach and mentor.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of our representative leaders at IOM America. Your unwavering dedication and tireless contributions have been instrumental in the growth and success of our ministry. Each of you plays a vital role in advancing our mission, and I am forever grateful for your commitment, wisdom, and support. Together, we are making a profound impact, and I look forward to continuing this journey with you all. Thank you for being such an integral part of our team and for embodying the values and vision of IOM America. – Dr. Stephen Phinney