

CASE STUDY

WorkLife Ministry

Church: Wooddale Church, Eden Prairie MN

Church Data: Suburban Church located in Minneapolis MN. Dr. Leith Anderson – Senior Pastor
Avg. weekly attendance: 5000, Launched whole body work-life ministry Feb 2003
church: www.Wooddale.org worklife ministry: www.WooddaleatWork.org



Weekly Workplace Influence: The church is intentionally influencing approximately 44,000 unchurched people in the workplace through the work lives of their congregation each week.

Ministry Overview:

Wooddale's Outreach Pastor

Somewhere in time a tragic distinction was made that caused people to conclude that unless they were pastors or missionaries their work was second rate at best. Thankfully, Christians are beginning to reclaim the truth that God has created each of us to work, in varied settings, with varied skills, for His glory and with His pleasure. No matter what your title, your work matters to God, and He will work through you to affect your workplace with His glory and love.

Knowing this, Wooddale Church launched its worklife ministry, and the impact has been significant! I have had many calls, e-mails and people stop me in the hall to tell me their appreciation of various aspects of the ministry. At this point, nearly 20% of our 5000 weekly church family is engaged with our workplace ministry and now taking steps to grow and impact others at work.

His Church at Work has laid the foundation for our sustainable worklife ministry at Wooddale Church. This has included personal consultation, development of ministry strategies, and creation of multiple online tools that help engage our congregation in ministry at their world of work. People have been greatly impressed with the professional and creative nature of the ministry, and they are grateful that we care about their work life.

I look forward to the continued growth and impact of this ministry innovation at Wooddale Church and strongly urge other churches to join the team. God is at work!

Geoff Bohleen
Outreach Pastor, Wooddale Church
Eden Prairie MN

From the Worklife Director of Wooddale Church:

Through owning a unique small part-time business, I had numerous opportunities to connect one on one with clients as well as with colleagues from 37 countries. God allowed me to experience almost daily ministry encounters through my work life connections. I needed support and help as I walked and lived as a workplace minister! In addition to my work life, I also was very active within the ministries of my local church.

About 4 years ago I approached my church with the conviction that there were many other people in our church pews who needed support and encouragement in the workplace! We agreed to launch a group in our church for this purpose called Evangelism Entrepreneurs. About six of us met weekly and prayed for an entire year while this initiative took shape. We had pastoral support, publicity, and 3-4 gatherings during that year. About 20 individuals would come out each time.....usually the attendance being different people each time. Keep in mind, we had a congregation of about 5000. We had a great time sharing, teaching one another and dreaming about how to more effectively spread this to others in our congregation.



However, after about a year of this it seemed that the effort it took and the lack of being able to *sustain* the group and ideas etc. just made it too unmanageable and too much work to continue. I and the church had a sense that there was some better way that we had not put our finger on. Was our niche ministry all there was - it helped such a limited few? We abandoned our efforts.

About a year later, God connected us to a bigger picture. We learned about a "whole body" Work Life process and infrastructure which was available to support the dreams of our church in this area of the workplace.

Since launching our Work Life Ministry at Wooddale Church in partnership with the planning, services and turn-key tools of His Church at Work...our church now has over 1200 people engaged in work life ministry at one level or another. We have the vision, tools and system to affirm and equip our people for life transformation in the extended church - on mission within the work places all across our city!

Yes, we still have some big events and niche type workplace elements. We still have ministry to the unemployed. We still have small groups and more. Just A LOT more of them--and many of them occurring IN the workplace itself and not on the church campus! So, it is critical to see beyond a niche workplace ministry or tactic that helps a relative few to a transforming "whole body" work life ministry that affirms and helps the whole church.

Ginger Johnson,
WorkLife Director, Wooddale Church



To learn more on how to effect change in this area for your church
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