



*Pastor Robert Olszewski, Family Life pastor for CrossWinds Community Church, began his partnership with Work with Purpose in 2014. Attending an event co-sponsored with the Made to Flourish pastors' network, he connected with both concepts that present faith/work/economics integration through whole-life discipleship and people who were also seeking to honor God by fostering whole-life discipleship in their personal life and in their leadership of others. Robert joined the Made to Flourish pastors' network and began a close relationship with Work with Purpose. He shared his new learning with CWCC's lead pastor, Tim Caspers, who immediately saw the value of the learning, connections, and resources Robert was developing. CWCC became a partner church with Work with Purpose, becoming a site for piloting new courses on whole-life discipleship understanding, as well as launching a concerted and well-designed long-term plan for leading CWCC in deeper whole-life discipleship through preaching, teaching, and action. CWCC also partnered with Work with Purpose's church ambassador/consultant to revise their articulation of vision, mission, and values and create a long-term plan to strategically bring these to fruition within the congregation, the Stillwater community, and most importantly, on the frontlines of each congregant's everyday life.*

*Here is Robert's explanation of his thoughts and actions in leading CWCC.*

## **The Process & Narrative for CrossWinds Community Church**

The process for integrating faith, work, and economics for the flourishing of all to the glory of God focused primarily on three key aspects. The first aspect was learning. The second aspect was relationships. The third aspect was implementing. Each step built into the next step and reinforced the previous step where applicable. Let's start by looking at the first step: learning.

**Learning** was throughout all of the steps. However the key to all learning started with reading and listening to experts & practitioners. Learning happened in two key ways. First was reading books like *Every Good Endeavor*, *Vision of Vocation*, and *Kingdom Calling*<sup>1</sup> to name a few. The reading helped to form ideas and provoke changing mental models that I had regarding God's kingdom. In addition to the reading it was the discussions I had with other pastors, thought leaders (Gary Black, Steven Garber, Tim Keller, Paul Williams, Brian Fikkert), and leaders within the local church. These times of processing together with others built into my thinking roots that gradually grew deep and strong. Learning also entailed sharing what I thought and trying it out with those I was leading in the church. An example of this was the implementation of *For the Life of the World (FLOW)* with Evan Koons in our adult education hour at church. This began the process of sharing FWE ideas and

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<sup>1</sup> Tim Keller and Kathrine Leary Alsdorf, *Every Good Endeavor*; Steven Garber, *Visions of Vocation*; Amy Sherman, *Kingdom Calling*.



truths with a broader audience. It was refreshing and encouraging when they also took to this teaching. Their desire for more and need for talking it out was deeply encouraging.

**Relationships** were the second aspect that helped to mold me and develop my learning and implementation of FWE. The first group of people that I developed a relationship with was at the Faith & Work Boot Camp in the fall of 2014, offered by Work with Purpose, the Made to Flourish network and other partners. Learning from Leith Anderson at our evening kick-off was my first personal connection to the FWE movement. Following the evening session I had many conversations with different pastors, academics, and practitioners. The one team that shared was a church in Cambridge that talked about their journey in developing a Kern Family Foundation Church Building Grant project (CBG) for a youth ministry project that integrated FWE.

A number of individuals also were instrumental in my journey. I began my relationship with Don Blue who would then point me to many other learners in this field of FWE in the Twin Cities. I also met Nathan Miller who was the herald for the CBG. My connection with him became invaluable as I learned and grew in my FWE thinking and development. Finally Bryan Bademan was a key relationship that I began to have at MacLaurinCSF (now Anselm House). He was instrumental in helping me think through key books and resources that I could use to help develop the FWE thinking. After attending this Faith/Work boot camp I began to connect with leaders in my church to develop and implement a CBG. This gave me the opportunity to meet and talk with Fred Oaks at the Kern Family Foundation who helped me navigate what we needed to procure the CBG. Through the MTF pastors' network I continued to build relationships and connect ideas and thoughts with real world challenges. Some of these connections started at MTF pastor sponsored gatherings and at Acton University both in 2015 and 2016. Other relationships were developed through the Word with Purpose Initiative at Bethel Seminary. My key contact was with Erin Rupe and TediAnne Hasapopoulos. The various thought leaders that they have hosted provided me with relationships that I would further connect with down the road. These new relationships deepened my learning and understanding for FWE.

**Implementation** is the third key aspect for helping me to integrate FWE. After developing and implementing the CBG for our leadership at CrossWinds, we started on a process for changing CWCC. There were three distinct ways in which we implemented what we learned from our CBG. These ideas came out of the work done by the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC). In particular the booklet titled, *Leading a Whole-life Disciple-making Church* by Neil Hudson and Tracy Cotterell provided the framework from which we would implement FWE at CrossWinds. The first step was implementation of a process focused on recasting our vision, mission, and values. Through TediAnne's facilitation we began to look at our current vision, mission, and values in order to align them with the FWE principles that we had been learning (see first aspect above).



The second way we implemented FWE was through the teaching/preaching of whole-life discipleship. The recasted mission stated that we will, ***“love God and represent Jesus with the whole of our lives by serving and loving others.”*** This focus has been integrated into all that we do at CWCC and we use this to help guide our focus as a church. The whole of lives is the thinking that we have learned from being a whole-life disciple that represents Jesus wherever we go.

The third and on-going way we have implemented FWE has been guided by the development of our Church Implementation Grant (CIG). This has provided a roadmap for our church and myself when thinking about how you implement FWE. The key is our focus on:

1. Recasting vision, mission, and values - always need to keep this out front so that people understand why we are doing what we are doing. This has been integrated into our worship service and planning for ministry.
2. Focus on the Frontline - we seek to equip followers of Jesus Christ for wherever they are (home, work, community, leisure).
3. Pastor to People Care retooled - our commitment is to build care that doesn't revolve solely around the pastors. This also has been our *When Helping Hurts*<sup>2</sup> strategy for all of our mission and care opportunities.
4. Grow leadership - this is where we focus on developing leaders, recruiting/growing new leaders, and keeping the whole-life discipleship concept before us all the time.
5. Making One Degree shifts - this helps us to understand that many changes happen incrementally and not all of a sudden. It is culture change done well.
6. Share Stories - this aspect is where we use video, articles (Frontline Focus), and personal stories to help reinforce what we have been learning and implementing from FWE.

In summary learning, relationships, and implementation is how I have experienced and enjoyed FWE within my own life and life of a local church. The process is an ongoing one and we are learning everyday how to make more on ramps for others to join in this movement. I thank God for all of the learning and relationships that God has given me to glorify Him.

Robert Olszewski  
Family Life Pastor  
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<sup>2</sup> See Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts*.