



What's all this talk about Multi-site ministry?



What are some of the advantages for each member of Gloria Dei if we go to multi-site?

From our research so far, we have seen that it opens up ministry opportunities for more people to serve. A recent example illustrates what would happen in a multi-site location. Our new hospitality ministry has launched into teams that consist of members who have agreed to serve once a month at a worship service of their choice. Under this new initiative, we now have at least tripled the participation of members who are engaged in helping worshippers feel welcome. Why do we want more people involved? Simply stated: God has given each person certain gifts and talents that are to be used for his glory. So, the more avenues we can provide for people to serve, the better. And since multi-site ministry draws from a huge spectrum of talents and gifts, it helps to develop more people into what God has called them to be. For example, multi-site ministry will require additional musicians, multi-media expertise, teachers and leaders. And since more people will be involved in using the gifts that God has given them, we believe great spiritual growth will occur in their individual lives, which will overflow into our church setting.

Imagine, coming to worship where everyone's gifts are used, people working on teams are genuinely connected, and loving each other. What would the world think of that? What would visitors see? Would they see Christians doing their "Christian duty" or would they see followers of Jesus who are passionate about their Lord and Savior?

What do we do now?

We desire your prayers. We believe more is at stake than a comfortable place to hold worship and to raise our children in the faith. Both are important, but so are the 200,000 people without a church home. And since we have been charged to help bring Jesus Christ to them also, please pray for the Governing Board, MATs, pastors and staff as they wrestle with all the questions and considerations that are laid before them.

More information

There are resources written about multi-site churches. The one that we have found most valuable is "The Multi-site Church Revolution" by Geoff Surratt, Greg Ligon and Warren Bird.

You can also go to our Web site for further information and updates or e-mail the Governing Board.

Governing Board - govboard@gloriadeionline.com

Web site - www.gloriadeionline.com

Your input is requested.

Please take time to fill out the enclosed response sheet. Additional sheets can be found on our Web site and at our Welcome Centers.

Thank you in advance for thinking, praying and responding to the possibilities of multi-site ministry at Gloria Dei.

The Strategic Plan for our congregation was approved in March 2008. It consisted of two parts. The first and most important section, the Ministry Destination, emphasized how we bring Jesus Christ to people for the first time and for a lifetime. It concentrated on the specific programs and new initiatives to help all people grow in their faith. The second section, Accomplishing the Ministry, entailed relocating our ministry.

Since that vote, ministry action teams have spent countless hours searching for suitable land and determining long-term facility needs. Even with all their hard work, we were unable to find a suitable and affordable new location for our ministry. Since our desire to bring Jesus to people increases, we are exploring other ways to accomplish the ministry. The following pages describe a viable direction called multi-site ministry that could bring Jesus to our community, our nation and our world.

What exactly is a multi-site church*?

A multi-site church is one church meeting in multiple locations. It can be different locations in the same city, different locations in different cities, or even different states, or nations.

A multi-site church can resemble any of a wide variety of models. Some churches have video-cast messages (recorded or live); others have in-person preaching on-site. Some churches maintain a similar worship atmosphere and style at all their campuses, and others allow or invite variation.

A multi-site ministry unites together with the concept of one ministry, operating under the direction of one vision, one staff, one budget and one Governing Board.

** Information from "The Multi-site Church Revolution" by Geoff Surratt, Greg Ligon and Warren Bird.*

What would it look like at Gloria Dei?

Since there are many variations of multi-site ministry, we have spent a considerable amount of time discussing how to incorporate some of the specifics into the culture at Gloria Dei. In other words, we want to build upon our current culture with a view of copying our strengths and culture at each location. With that in mind, every site would have its own worship service with the same message and the same ministry opportunities for children, youth and adults. The message, curriculum and discipleship process would be the same at every location. So no matter what location you visit, you can expect a familiarity that you have grown accustomed to at Gloria Dei.



Why become multi-site?

According to Leadership Network, a non-profit organization formed in 1984 to help churches generate kingdom results, multi-site ministry reaches more people and mobilizes more volunteers. Their studies reveal that 90 percent of multi-site churches succeed.

The purpose of becoming a multi-site church is to make more disciples by bringing the church closer to where people are. In the metro area, there are approximately 200,000 people without a church home. With multi-site campuses, we would increase our presence in Urbandale and other areas.

In addition, due to the increase of membership at Gloria Dei and reaching our worship and parking capacity, we need more space if the congregation is to continue to experience substantial growth. Currently, our facility continues to be used everyday of the week; oftentimes, we cannot oblige the room requests from our members and the community.

From a practical point of view, conservation of resources will also occur because each site will offer the same message, curriculum for children and youth and small groups. Thus, the resources of a very large church can be utilized within the intimacy of a small to medium size worship setting.

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Have other churches been successful at launching a multi-site ministry?

In the last several years, multi-site churches have grown exponentially. In 1980, there were 10 multi-site churches; in 2005, 1,500 sprang up throughout the country; and now there are more than 3,000 multi-site churches.

According to recent statistics, 10 percent of worshippers now attend a multi-site church.

The growth of multi-site churches can also be seen in the LCMS. A survey conducted by Rev. Kevin Wilson, District Executive from the Ohio District LCMS, identified 70 percent of LCMS churches that became multi-site congregations experienced an overall increase in worship attendance after starting a new campus. The survey also showed some other signs of health

among LCMS multi-site churches—60 percent of the multi-site congregations have two campuses, 30 percent have more than two campuses.

What does the LCMS say about this?

Iowa District West is in constant communication with Gloria Dei concerning multi-site ministry. They are watching this movement closely because they believe that it might be a possible model for rural congregations.

What has been decided?

The Governing Board has decided multi-site ministry is the direction to investigate as evidence shows it is a viable way to bring Jesus Christ to people for the first time and a lifetime.

Four Ministry Action Teams (MATs) have been developed to study all the ramifications, benefits and hurdles of developing a multi-site ministry.

Ministry MAT

Ultimately the reason we are looking into multi-site ministry is to further God's kingdom by bringing Jesus Christ to people for the first time and for a lifetime. This MAT will study the specifics of multi-site ministry by evaluating how multi-site ministry will enhance our ministry, establishing staffing needs, defining terminology, and setting the specific logistics of how each ministry is to be implemented.

Finance MAT

This MAT will do a cost analysis of the start-up and maintenance costs of a new site along with projected costs of building improvements at our current facility. They will also generate a financial plan for the future of our ministry.

Facility MAT

This MAT will look at our current Aurora facility to determine what is needed to keep the facility in good working condition. They will develop a site selection matrix to determine existing buildings in the Urbandale area that may be a viable option for us to pursue. Other questions that they will need to answer are: How

many square feet of space will be needed for a full functioning campus? What equipment needs to be purchased? What would a possible new campus look like?

Communication MAT

Keeping the congregation informed about the development and progress of multi-site ministry is the objective of this MAT. They will produce

publications that will educate the congregation and also create an avenue for the congregation to communicate their thoughts and insights.

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