

Workplace
Chaplains U.S.

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Cadillac, MI
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Our Mission:

Partnering with client
companies to provide
care, counsel and crisis
management services
to their employees from
a Christian perspective.

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CHAPLAINS @ WORK

Workplace Chaplains U.S.



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Celebrating a Decade!!!

Where did the time go? It seems like just a few months ago Dr. Rich Westmaas and I were exploring the concept of workplace chaplaincy and bouncing the idea off local church and business leaders.

The idea (locally) actually began as early as 1988 (over 20 years ago!) when Dr. Westmaas read an article about Rev. Jack VanderLaan who had created a chaplaincy service within a large company called Waste Management, Inc.

It wasn't until 1996 that I stumbled on a three year old letter (written in 1993) from Dr. Westmaas to the area churches about this concept.

This little seed had been germinated five years before being planted and had lain dormant for several more years before it was used in God's profound plan to initiate a conversation between myself and Dr. Westmaas.

In 1997 meetings were held with area church and business leaders that moved the concept toward formation of a board and a non-profit 501 (c)3 status.

And finally, in January of 1999 a ministry was launched with four small area businesses serving as "guinea pigs." A year and a half later we needed a second chaplain and hired Rich Langton. Here we are now — 10 years

later — serving 29 businesses with a total of over 4000 employees in five cities in two states with 22 chaplains/associates.

As we prepare to celebrate our first 10 years of ministry at our April board meeting, I am impressed that God did some amazing things throughout these years of germination and growth — most important of which was having the right people in the right place at the right time.

Please pray with us that He will bless us into our second decade.

Ron Klimp
Executive Director

Advancing the Mission

Welcome to CapTrust Financial Advisors

We would like to acknowledge a new client in Holland, MI who began in March 2009. **CapTrust Financial Advisors** is a full service investment consulting firm that has earned a place on the *Barron's Top 100 Independent Financial Advisors* list. They are a group of integrity filled, Christian professionals who are worth considering for your investment needs. Feel free to

contact them (www.captrustholland.com) and when you do thank them for their partnership with Workplace Chaplains US.

Carl Beridon joins the WPC Staff in Key Role

We are very pleased to announce the addition of Carl Beridon to our staff in the Holland, MI area. Carl comes to us with a diverse background in ministry and business. He is ordained and will be serving as a chaplain

but he also brings skills in marketing/development.



(Continued, p. 2)

So What Does a Chaplain Do?

I guess you are never too old to learn something new.

Recently Rich Langton and I completed a continuing education unit and took the instructor (a Roman Catholic Sister) on a tour of some of the locations we serve. In one area of a metal fabrication shop I approached a rather rough and tough individual and struck up a conversation.

After being introduced as my guest, Sister Bonnie surprised me by very quickly asking, "So what does a chaplains do for a place like this?"

Just as quickly this employee pointed to a boiler on a wall nearby and said, "See that valve on the side? That is the safety valve that opens and lets off steam if things overheat so that the whole boiler doesn't explode. That's what a chaplain does."

Wow! Not eloquent, but pretty vivid.

There are many roles that a chaplain plays (counselor, coach, referral agent, spiritual guide). I would never have thought of describing a chaplain as a "relief valve," but this employee without hesitating a moment gave us a word picture that

describes an important function that we perform.

Psychologists tell us that any emotion that we bury without proper resolution has the potential for turning into anger.

Anger is usually negative rather than positive; destructive rather than constructive. By venting and problem solving we have the possibility of turning this "steam" into something positive, or at least less harmful, rather than building into an explosion.

Ron Klimp
Executive Director

(Cont'd from "Advancing...")

For the last few years we have desired to see our presence in the south-west Michigan area grow but we lacked the resources to accomplish this goal. We believe Carl's coming on board will assist that growth to take place as we identify area businesses who we can partner with to provide "care, counsel and crisis management services from a Christian perspective."

If you are aware of businesses that you feel would be open to discussing how Workplace Chaplains could partner with them please contact Carl or Rich Langton and they will be glad to discuss the process with them.

Rich Langton
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We appreciate your support!

Whether large or small, every gift helps us cover the cost of spreading the word that such a ministry exists to serve the business world.

Thanks and God Bless!!!

Shift to e-letter

We have asked for and received permission to email this to a growing number of you folks on our mailing list. In doing so we save paper, ink, postage, time and the environment.

If you are receiving this on line, then thanks for helping us make the transition.

If you don't have high speed internet, or just prefer to see things on paper, then we will happily continue to send these to your regular mailbox.

Our year end (December) edition will still be sent on paper to all our friends and supporters.

If you received this newsletter by "snail mail" and would like to receive it by email, we would appreciate your response by noting your email address on the enclosed response sheet, or just sending an email to:

admasst@workplacechaplains.us

Notes from our Chaplains

~ While walking through the cafeteria, I stopped to visit with an employee. Shortly after, a doctor stopped at my table. I asked him how his day was going and he said to be honest it's not going well at all. He then shared with me some of the problems in addition to a very bad yesterday. I was able to reframe some of the situation back to him and he said, "I am really glad I talked with you today. I can see now that I was concentrating on the wrong things." He left with some hope that the rest of the day could be better.

(Ed Gilbert - serving Mercy Hospital)

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**May the sacrifice of  
the cross  
never be  
wasted.**

