

Church Leader, I am excited to write you today as the CEO of Leadership Network.

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Leadership  Network *Advance*



From the Desk of the CEO

By Ron Edmondson, CEO

The board of trustees for Leadership Network made a decision in April of this year to name me the next Chief Executive Officer of Leadership Network. I wanted to end well at the church where I was pastor, so we delayed my start date until July 1. The past few weeks have been a blur for Cheryl and me. We moved to Dallas, unpacked a bunch of boxes and, mostly because of Cheryl's efforts, we parked two cars in the garage the second week in town. I've tried to get to know local staff. I especially appreciate Diane Reynolds (CFO) and Greg Ligon (COO). They've displayed phenomenal patience as I learn Leadership Network vernacular, history and culture. The learning curve is steep. We have a lot going on these days.

In many ways I feel my whole career has shaped me for this opportunity. I have a long, entrepreneurial business background. I have served on the boards of dozens of non-profits at the local, state and national level. For 16 years, I have been a senior pastor, seeing success in church planting and revitalization. In my career, I have experience leading organizations, but I also keenly understand the needs of clients we serve at Leadership Network. I love the local church and I'm passionate about seeing ministers and their churches thrive.

In other ways, however, this is a very humbling appointment. Last month, at a memorial service for our founder, Bob Buford, I heard story after story of the investment Bob and Leadership Network have made in the Kingdom. It's overwhelming to hear the "back stories", which by design Bob or the organization never made completely known. **Although we've mostly remained behind the scenes, the impact of Leadership Network on the church today is monumental.** I learn more about this impact everyday. I'm still in awe of the reality God would allow me to serve in this position at such a time as this.

I talked with a ministry leader last week who told me a story of his first involvement with Leadership Network. They were a rapidly growing church plant. The staff was about to burn out and had capped out their leadership potential. They reached out to Leadership

Network for help and, in his words, **“I’m confident we wouldn’t have survived had it not been for the investment in us by Leadership Network.”**

We have so much work to do. The church certainly needs more innovation these days, something we’ve become known to foster. Pastors and ministry leaders still need peer coaching and development, as well as the research and best practices only an organization like Leadership Network can provide. Churches today need access to the best and brightest minds. Next generation leaders will always be hungry for mentoring and coaching. I feel I have job security for a while as we continue to live out our mission.

The work of Leadership Network is as needed today as when we were founded. I’m excited about the journey ahead.

As I have spoken with pastors the last couple weeks I’ve been asking one question to help me continue to learn and explore new ventures for Leadership Network. The question: **“What issues, concerns, opportunities, challenges, etc., would you be most interested in seeing us explore and then assist the church in addressing?”** If you have thoughts on this question, I’d love to hear from you. And, if you don’t have thoughts, I’d still love to hear from you. We are here to serve the church.

Farewell After 13 Years, Hello ECFA.org

By Warren Bird, Ph.D.

I’m writing to say farewell as I leave Leadership Network after 13 wonderful years.

It’s been a great ride. I’m so grateful to Leadership Network co-founder Bob Buford, CEO Dave Travis, and many others who by God’s blessing created the platform and space for me to meet a lot of amazing people, capture their stories and insights, and share them with others—including you.

Since 2006 I’ve had the privilege of editing 373 issues of Leadership Network Advance (this epublication), overseeing 83 concept papers, writing/co-writing 51 survey research reports, and releasing 16 of the 30 books that I’ve co-authored.

On July 16, I’ll take a similar role as vice president of research for ECFA.org (Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability). I’ll focus especially on their fastest-growing division: large churches. You can connect with us at

http://go.leadnet.org/e/95302/Follow/2xgxnn/210887189?h=GdkD08xaVgg-G59fOi4cEy6YnzzuMUo27w3_KBeKByU. Let’s stay in touch.

To learn more about Dr. Bird's transition to ECFA, [read his interview with Dave Travis](#).

The 2018 Large Church Salary Report Is Here!

By Tim Nations, Director of Communication and Design

Leadership Network's bi-annual Large Church Salary, Staff and Benefits research by Dr. Warren Bird is now complete and the FREE executive summary, "7 Vital Benchmarks in Church Compensation" is ready for download!

As the title of the executive summary suggests, this report will unpack 7 staffing and compensation benchmarks revealed through our research of 13,039 employees from 1,043 large churches in the U.S. and Canada.

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