

Garland church takes a byte out of unemployment with teaching ministry_122203

December 20, 2003

Posted: 12/19/03

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By George Henson

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GARLAND-Spring Creek Baptist Church is doing its bit to take a byte out of unemployment.

A new computer-training ministry emerged as the church sought a way to make a long-term impact on its Garland neighborhood, Pastor Bryce Greene said. "We were looking for a viable and sustainable community ministry that no one else was doing."

The church identified unemployment and underemployment as the need and computer training as the opportunity.

For two years, church members have offered training in Microsoft Office programs, such as Word, Excel and PowerPoint. More than 150 adults have taken at least one course through the ministry



Participants in the computer-education program of Spring Creek Baptist Church in Garland work on classroom assignments.

“Most come to us either jobless or in need of a better job,” Greene said. “Usually, by the time they complete their first course, they have a job. That was our purpose in doing the training.”

The church has set up a training center with eight work stations. Much of the hardware and networking system was donated, but the church paid for the furniture and rent space. Classes are offered on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

Church prospects have been the primary beneficiaries of the program so far, Greene said. “If people from our membership want to come, they are welcome. But right now, we're full.”

Most classes have a waiting list, which Greene believes demonstrates the need for the ministry. Some people attend the classes upon the recommendation of the Texas Workforce Commission.

Deacon Cliff Snell, one of the class facilitators, said one of the most gratifying parts of the ministry is to see people become confident and proficient and go on to better employment.

“They are usually here from three to six months learning the various software. After that, they have usually found a job, or upgraded the one they had and don't have the time to come any more.”

Just as importantly, the ministry has helped the church advance its

presence in Garland, Greene said.

“It's been a good means of establishing ourselves in the community, of giving our people who are involved an avenue for ministry and for establishing ourselves as a dependable partner with the various governmental and social service agencies.”

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