

CØDA

Ready For A MEGA Life!

From my humble beginnings as an aspiring rock n roll bassist in the small town of Jackson, Minnesota I stayed the course in music because it was my passion and dream. Of course it took hard work, dedication, some decent chops and certainly some good luck (or blessings) along the way. Somewhere around age 16 I had a hunch to “go west young man” and get out to Los Angeles where the action was happening in rock n roll during the early 1980’s.

Within days of my high school graduation in 1983 I quickly migrated out to LA. Upon my arrival I melded into the tribe of musicians and artists that would create the next big movement in heavy metal music, that being the Thrash metal genre.

10 years later, and during a blessed career in music, I relocated to Scottsdale, AZ. Soon after I married, had two beautiful children, and we took up membership in a Lutheran church after enrolling our children there for elementary school. A few years later I even accepted a position as on the board of Elders for the church. Meanwhile, a new pastor was accepting a call to the church and he asked me to step up and help start a new contemporary worship service.

Now, I’ve played in church quite a bit over the years and ironically my two favorite music forms are Metal and Praise music. But, as many of you know, playing in church and actually leading the service can be two totally different animals. A bit scared and unsure how things were go-

ing to play out, we took the leap of faith and began the new MEGA Life! Ministries worship service in the fall of 2007(www.megalifeministries.org).

Oddly, the service has become one of my most rewarding and musically invigorating gigs I’ve ever had...a gig that literally landed in my lap and not something I had to chase down either. Not only are the parishioners respectful (no bar fights, spilled drinks and foul mouthed hecklers in the crowd like many secular gigs) but it’s a musical event my whole family participates in. Plus, I’d finally had been given the venue to put into practical application the very words I’d been trying to live by for many years which is “Play music for God, not us”.

I know my story’s not unique as our communities are filled with people who get “the call” to step up and serve with their gifts. In fact, I think that’s the point... that the Lord knows our heart and can see opportunities in our lives that he can use to glorify His kingdom at exactly the right time for both Him and us.

Jeremiah 29:11 says **“For I know the plans I have for you” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”** Boy, do those words have new meaning! I default to a close friend and spiritual mentor of mine who gave me a simple question to ask when struggling on a decision: **“Will this decision make me look good, or will it make God look good?”** That put a whole new slant on my

willingness to do MEGA Life! and even a new perspective on many other secular gigs that continue to come my way as well. Am I serving me, or am I serving Him? It keeps things pretty simple....

Music was my passion and I went for it all guns a blazing but I had no idea that my small town Lutheran upbringing would serve as a catalyst for some much bigger things to come later in my life, things that would ultimately serve the Lord’s kingdom rather than my own. I’ve come to appreciate God’s sense of humor and how He finds masterful ways of capitalizing on the events in our lives to better serve Him, too. In my case, it seems all those hunches as a teenager may have just been tiny steps toward a more eternal goal. I’m glad I was given the courage to follow those steps as it seems God had his hand on my shoulder the whole time, even while playing Heavy Metal. I guess he knew the plans he had for me....

God’s Peace
David Ellefson

David Ellefson is the former Megadeth bassist and has his own band F5. He also co-founded and leads worship for the MEGA Life! Ministries in Scottsdale, AZ (www.megalifeministries.org and www.davidellefson.com).

