

Church Profile: Catalyst Church Woodland

History

Catalyst Woodland began in 2013 when Pastor Matt Van Peurse, his wife Kirsten, and their three young sons moved from Southern California to Woodland to plant a new faith community. Our first public worship service was held in August 2014, and we launched weekly services on December 7, 2014.

We initially gathered at Tafoya Elementary School until the summer of 2018, when we moved downtown to our current location at 120 Main Street. Shortly after the move, we expanded to two Sunday services in January 2019.

From the beginning, Catalyst Woodland has prioritized tangible expressions of love for our city. Two of our most significant annual initiatives include providing school supplies to every public elementary school student in Woodland and fulfilling the Christmas wish of every foster child in Yolo County.

Mission and Vision

Our mission is simple and central: **we exist to help people find and follow Jesus.**

We pursue this mission through three core values:

- **Live like Jesus**
- **In Community**
- **On Mission**

Catalyst Woodland is deeply shaped by Luke 15. We see ourselves as a people who believe that love goes looking. While we celebrate the ninety-nine, we refuse to remain comfortable when one is missing. We are willing to leave the safety of the fold, the predictability of the path, and the approval of the crowd to pursue the lost, not because it is efficient, but because it is faithful.

We believe heaven still celebrates over one soul found, and we want our lives and our church to echo that joy. This posture has often led people to walk through our doors and say, *“This place feels different.”*

Our Local Community

In the 1980s and 1990s, Woodland emerged as a key transportation hub along Interstate 5, positioned roughly at the midpoint between Mexico and Canada. This led to rapid growth as distribution companies and warehouses moved into the area.

The economic downturn of 2008 marked a turning point. Many of those companies folded, leaving behind large amounts of vacant commercial space and a struggling downtown. In response, the city faced a defining question: *Who do we want to become?*

Woodland chose to lean into its deep agricultural heritage. In 2019, the city launched a new civic identity—**“The Food Front.”** This initiative reflects Woodland’s effort to unite the community,

businesses, and institutions around a shared vision of responsible and innovative food and agriculture for the region and the world.

Building on this vision, the city adopted a comprehensive multi-year growth plan focused on investment and infrastructure, positioning Woodland as a future center of agricultural technology.

Today, Woodland reflects a blend of its surrounding regions—a place where country conservatives live alongside University liberals, creating a uniquely diverse and dynamic community. The population is roughly evenly split between White and Hispanic residents, with East Indian families representing a steadily growing segment of the city. The city's master plan anticipates population growth from approximately 63,000 residents to more than 80,000 in the coming years.

Church Attendance and Leadership

Catalyst Woodland is currently an average weekly attendance of 210–250 people gathering in worship. A significant portion of our congregation consists of individuals who are new to church or returning after many years away. Our church reflects diversity across age, ethnicity, and life experience.

Our team includes three part-time staff members: a Communications Director, a Worship Director, and a Next Generation Director. We are also supported by three key volunteer leaders serving as Engagement Coordinator, Administrator, and Prayer Director. Our elder team consists of four members, including the Lead Pastor.

In many ways, Catalyst Woodland is positioned for continued growth. Over the past two years, we have celebrated more than 20 baptisms, experienced steady year-over-year growth in attendance and giving, and maintained strong engagement in community groups, serving teams, and generosity.

Key Challenges and Opportunities

One of our most significant ongoing challenges is helping people develop consistent discipleship rhythms and faith practices beyond Sunday gatherings. While we see strong engagement on weekends, we believe there is considerable opportunity for a leader who is passionate about forming disciples throughout the week.

Another major opportunity lies with the next generation. Currently, there is minimal church presence on the campuses of Woodland's two high schools and two middle schools. While several churches in the city offer youth ministries, many primarily serve students already connected to the local Christian school.

Catalyst Woodland has built meaningful relationships within the local school district, and we believe this represents one of the most strategic opportunities for gospel impact and growth in the years ahead. A prospective lead pastor will have significant freedom and support to shape this ministry area.

Final Note

Catalyst Woodland is a healthy, mission-driven church with strong community credibility, a clear gospel identity, and meaningful momentum. We are prayerfully seeking a lead pastor who senses God's invitation to shepherd this next season, building on a solid foundation while helping us grow deeper in discipleship and broader in mission.