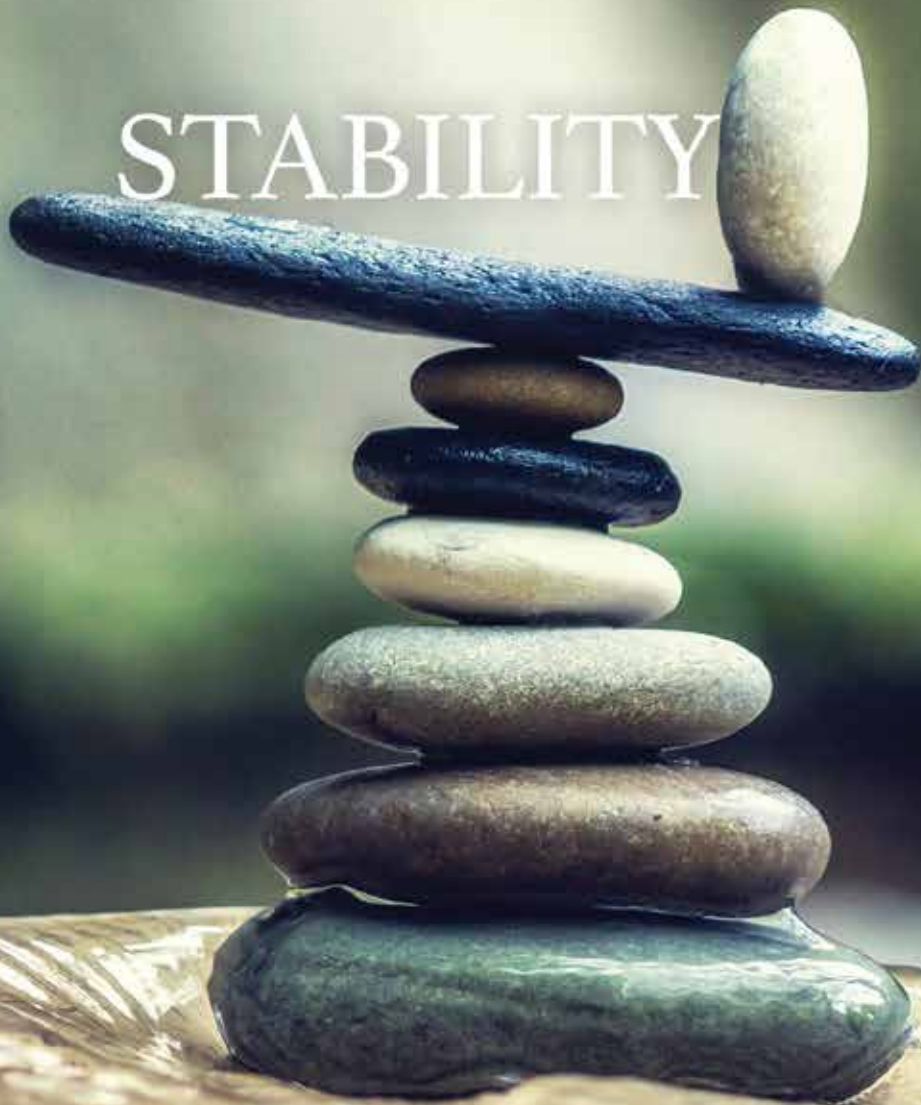


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STABILITY



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Special Stability Interview
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on Page 26



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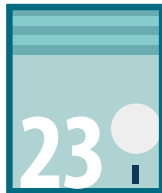
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We each have our own challenges that compete with our stability in God and throughout life.



It's All Mental!

If we are going to be spiritually mature, we are going to have to engage our minds to be stable in our thinking, and believing the truth.



Stability in Financial Policies

People don't do what you expect; they do what you inspect.



2022 TMC Recap

Enjoy conference photos and inspiring testimonials from attendees whose lives and ministries were touched by this year's conference.

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Big State Electric is a strong advocate of employing project-specific quality plans and quality customer service.

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Humble Elevator Service is known for being well-rounded in all aspects of the elevator industry whether it be new construction, modernization, repair, or service.

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PUBLISHER/EDITOR IN CHIEF Patti Malott | Houston, Texas 832.478.5131

MANAGING EDITOR Andrea MacKellar | Houston, Texas 832.478.5131

COPYEDITOR Reagan Bon | Houston, Texas 832.478.5131

ASSISTANT EDITOR Tia Malott | Houston, Texas 832.478.5131

AD EDITOR Karen Rusk | Houston, Texas 832.478.5131

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Keep your contact information current. The lifeline of communication to our members is through correct contact information, i.e. key contact names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses. Send all updates to patti@churchco-op.org. Help us keep you informed of the latest in events and savings from our vendors.

Editor's Note: For submitting articles, artwork, or comments about this publication, please contact: Patti Malott at 832.478.5131 | patti@churchco-op.org



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From the Director

I will never forget the day we were touring homes with our real estate agent. When we showed interest in the home we currently live in, we started going over the details. "This house has several positive features," she added. When we asked her to reveal them, she pointed out that the house had twenty-seven piers installed under the foundation. Since we moved from Michigan where the black soil is firm, we could not understand why piers were needed unless there was something wrong with the house. We quickly learned that this was very normal for the Houston area with the soil being unstable. The piers provided stability in an unstable environment. We still get those hairline cracks in the sheetrock from time to time, but it is comforting to know that the house sits on a firm foundation.

As we look at the world around us, we can easily comprehend the areas that are unstable. Instead of focusing on that which is not stable, we decided to shift our focus to the areas where stability is needed—in our lives and in every area of ministry.

Instead of a lead article by one person, you will find a discussion between our Executive Staff where we addressed three questions. You can find our discussion beginning on page 17. You can also find additional articles throughout the magazine from "Stability in the Cloud" to "Financial Reports".

Learn some interesting facts about our newest employees, Tia and Ryan, on page 37. We are grateful to have them on our team, and they look forward to serving you.

We have two new vendors to help save those ministry dollars. Big State Electric is celebrating 55 years of service and is ready to help you with your electrical needs. Humble Elevator Service was established in 1985 and is available to service your elevator units and components.

We know how everyone loves pictures, so we included some 2022 Texas Ministry Conference Photos taken by R&M Photography and Kyle Buthod throughout the magazine. A big shoutout to those who made the conference successful such as speakers, sponsors, vendors, volunteers, CFBC and staff, and the CO+OP team. Mark your calendars for February 16, 2023, where we will celebrate 35 years serving churches, schools, and nonprofit ministries.

In the meantime, find a quiet place, relax, and enjoy this issue of CO+OP magazine!

Together We Equip!

Patti Malott, CEO/Executive Director



Connecting People and Resources

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Patti Malott, CEO/Executive Director
patti@churchco-op.org

John Hagarty - Director of Member/Vendor Relations
john@churchco-op.org





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The purpose of the Texas Ministry ConferenceSM is to provide tools and resources for those who serve in churches, schools, and nonprofit organizations. This includes both people in leadership who drive the vision and those who support them such as employees; committee, lay, council, and session members; elders and volunteers.

We do this at our annual conference by offering affordable training, educational workshops, quality vendors and sponsors, networking, fellowship, and encouragement.

The Texas Ministry ConferenceSM is held the third Thursday of each February.

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RYAN FRYAR
Relationship Manager/
Dallas/Fort Worth



KATIE TODD
Staff Accountant



ANDREA MACKELLAR
Executive Assistant



TIA MALOTT
Administrative Assistant



TIA STABENOW
Website Designer



LAUREN BURNSIDE
Graphic Designer



REAGAN BON
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cleansweep

by Geoff Abbott

Having Stable Systems in Place

When looking to save money on housekeeping supplies, having stable systems in place is the first consideration. Whether it is cleaning chemicals, hand hygiene, paper products, or trash liners, having a program for each category saves labor and product costs. When evaluating a system, customers should look at the quality of the products and the service the janitorial supply distributor supplies to save the facility money. With current supply chain issues facilities must also determine if the products and their components are manufactured in America.

Worrying about ordering cleaning chemicals from different vendors and then diluting the products by hand is too time consuming and frustrating. Buckeye has chemical systems like the Eco® Proportioning Program. With Eco, facilities can order all cleaning chemicals from one place. Each Eco product is automatically diluted and dispensed from an Eco proportioning system. Facilities no longer have to dilute by hand. Eco is an easy-to-operate system where each product is number and color coded to help staff members easily identify products and keep them organized. Eco products have a full line of cleaning chemicals suitable for the needs of every different type of facility. Whether you have a facility with carpet, LVT, VCT, ceramic tile, etc., the Eco system can be customized for your facility. The end result is saving facilities cost on chemicals with products that perform better.

Hand hygiene is also a system that is overlooked. Now more than ever, coming out of the pandemic, facilities and their customers are more aware of cleanliness and having hand sanitizer available. Hand hygiene should be looked at as a system, not just products. Symmetry Hand Hygiene provides a program for all hand hygiene needs. Providing peace of mind for visitors during and after the pandemic, it also includes providing opportunities for hand hygiene. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) state that hand hygiene is one of the most important steps in reducing the spread of germs. A facility needs hand sanitizer, hand soap, and custom hand hygiene awareness pieces to have a complete program. Products should be pleasant to use and not dry your hands out or leave them sticky.

Custodial paper products go in tandem with hand hygiene. When you are done cleaning your hands, you need the correct products to dry them. When evaluating a paper system, facilities need to standardize dispensers and look at their capacity. New, high-capacity dispensers lower waste and extend time between having to reload the paper. Now facilities have to look at where the paper is made to avoid supply chain disruptions.



Guest experience is often impacted by the cleanliness of a facility. To improve cleanliness, facilities need to have stable systems in place for products and training on using products.

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Facilities often look only at price when purchasing trash liners and treat them as a commodity. Many times the trash liners people are purchasing are not the correct size, thickness, or application. Trash liners should be made to fit the trash cans snugly. Gateway Liners has a line of trash bags called R-Fit that are customized for each size trash can so as to not waste plastic and money. The quality of the plastic resin makes a huge difference in the strength of the liner. R-Fit liners provide the lightest, strongest, and greenest solution to significantly reduce the plastic waste that impacts our environment. Trash liners should work every time and not leak or tear. Using a proper trash liner system lowers the cost and number of liners a facility has to purchase.

Finally, what brings all these systems together is having a proper training program. When purchasing cleaning chemicals, supplies, and equipment, hands-on training should be provided at no charge. Staff need to know the proper and most efficient ways to clean facilities and keep equipment running. Guest experience is often impacted by the cleanliness of a facility. To improve cleanliness, facilities need to have stable systems in place for products and training on using products. When this is achieved, ordering products is streamlined and cost savings is achieved. +



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Geoff Abbott

Geoff Abbott is currently the Sales Manager at Buckeye Cleaning Center-Houston. He manages an 8-person sales force for Buckeye's Houston office. He has 15 years of experience in the Jan/San industry, having originally started with Buckeye as a Schools & Government Specialist.

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Stability in the Cloud

The IT world has been moving to the Cloud for some time now. Cloud services provide application, email, and database servers with a promise of near zero downtime and availability worldwide. But is the Cloud stable and safe? Below we will try to demystify as well as clarify the trustworthiness and stability of “The Cloud.”

The best Cloud service providers offer professionally managed servers, storage, and disaster recovery with uptime and data recovery service level commitments. This relieves the organization from the expenses associated with provisioning and maintaining IT infrastructure in-house. While that is a very simplified description, one example of something that can be better managed in the Cloud is backups and recovery. In-house backup solutions carry some degree of risk. External drives, tapes, or dedicated hard drives can fail if not properly maintained and tested. One of the biggest advantages of the Cloud is that provider companies keep data in multiple servers, spread across the world.

According to Statista.com, in 2021, approximately 50% of all corporate data is stored in the Cloud. This share has continued to grow as companies increasingly shift their resources to the Cloud! This adoption rate is amazing. Statista.com goes on to say that, in terms of Cloud computing, the hosting, storage, and computing market for 2021 was approximately 70.8 billion dollars! General Electric (GE) began its digital transformation in 2014 with Amazon Web Services (AWS). Coca Cola has become the biggest user of AWS. In 2019 Kroger moved to using all Microsoft Azure Cloud services. Most of the internet-based services we use every day are hosted on the Cloud. These include Netflix, Pinterest, Vivino, Gameloft, Etsy, eBay, Twitter, PayPal, and more.

With Cloud services today, we can connect to a server on the other side of the world literally as fast as one sitting in our offices. Upgrades, operating system patches, and storage management are all handled by the Cloud service provider. This is a significant amount of time, effort, and expense not dedicated to core business needs. In addition, most Cloud providers tout an uptime of 99.99%. That translates to less than 52 minutes of downtime per year!

The Cloud keeps data safe as well as available. With highly encrypted sites, multi-factor password authentication, and more robust firewalls than organizations can typically afford, the Cloud has never been safer. Yes, there are occasional failures or incidents that make big news. It’s big news now because it happens so rarely! Disaster recovery and the ability to get to data no matter the location is a huge advantage the Cloud offers.

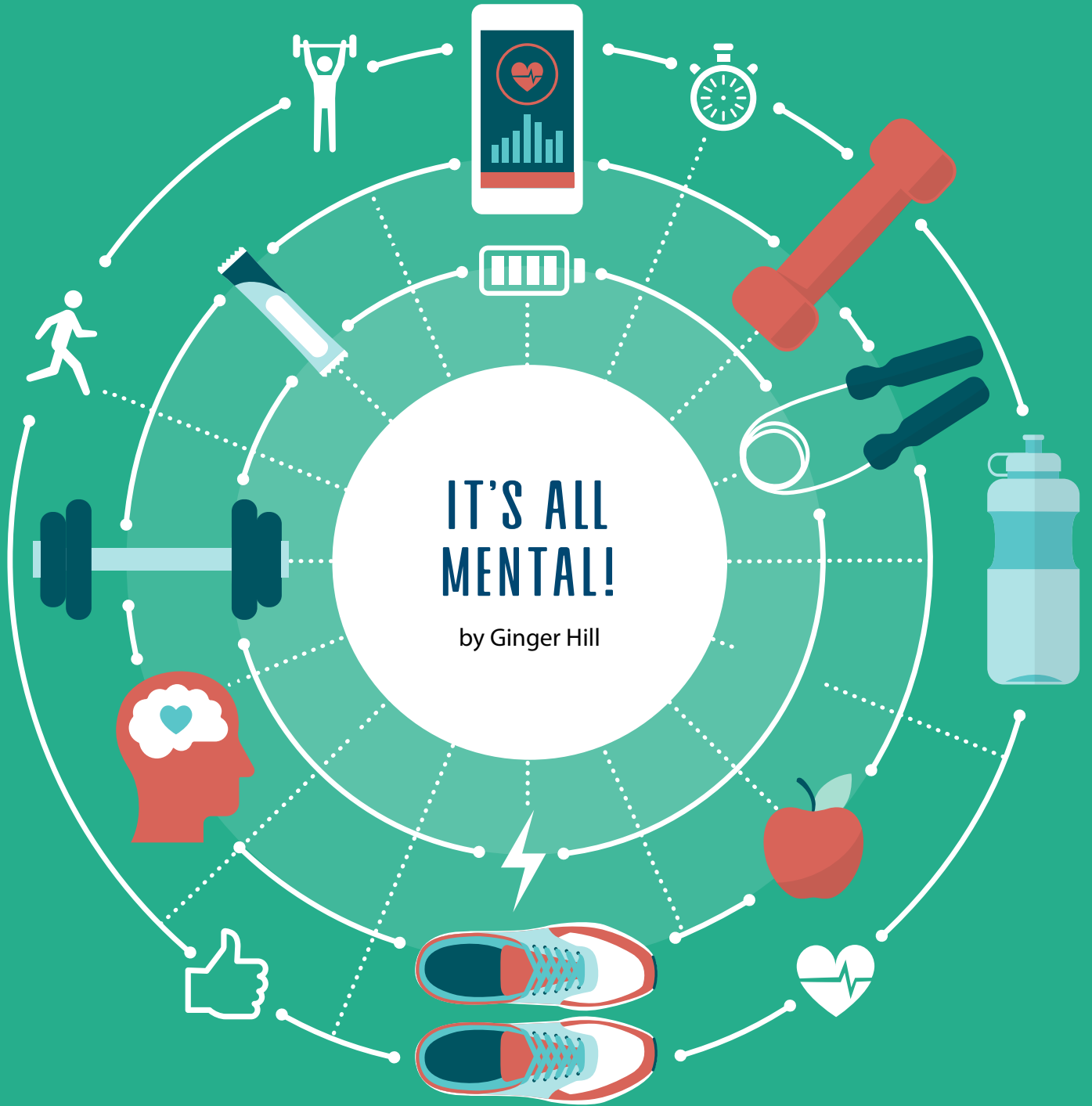
In closing, there are many compelling reasons to depend on Cloud services for valuable network, application, and data infrastructure needs, not the least of which is that these services have matured and improved over time. Traditional objections including fear of handing over control, data security, and possible downtime are being outweighed by the clear advantages offered by high quality Cloud service providers! +



Doug Reed

Vice President and COO
BEMA Information Technologies

As a Managed IT Services Provider, BEMA Information Technologies can assist your organization in fine-tuning your environment to live more phish-free in the 21st century.



When my husband was a runner, he said that the key to running a successful race is to remember that *"It's all mental!"* In other words, you can train hard, but if you can't control your thoughts and emotions during the race, you probably won't meet your goals.

The same is true for us, as believers, as we run the race marked out before us.
This is because:

Spiritual maturity requires mental stability!

In Ephesians 4, we are encouraged to grow in maturity. Living a life worthy of our calling requires that we move beyond infantile thinking. Instead, we are to move toward maturity by focusing on and speaking the truth in love.

In the scriptures, there is an interesting phrase that describes the mental stability that is needed for spiritual maturity: *sober-minded*.

Sober - not drunk; not affected by alcohol

Minded - having the way of thinking

To be sober-minded is to have the way of thinking of someone who is not drunk or affected by alcohol.

While excessive drinking makes us unstable, uncontrolled, unaware, unwary, and unwise, a sober-minded person is:

- Stable in his thinking
- Self-controlled in his emotions
- Watchful in his circumstances
- Careful in his acting, judging, and deciding
- Wise in his judgments.

According to the Scriptures, being sober-minded is important in the Christian life because it helps us to:

- Foil the plans of the enemy (1 Peter 5:8, NIV)
- Focus on Christ-like character (1 Peter 1:13–16, NIV)
- Fulfill our ministry assignments (2 Timothy 4:5, ESV)

In the church, we are taught that to walk as a mature person in the will of God, we must resist living according to the ways of the world by renewing our minds. (Romans 12:1–2, NIV)

Renewing our minds requires that we evaluate our thinking and *“take every thought captive and make it obedient to Christ”* so we can demolish strongholds (thoughts, opinions, and arguments against the knowledge of God). (2 Cor 10: 4-5, NIV). This evaluation of our thinking helps us to focus on the truth so we can confidently believe and receive God’s wisdom, rather than be unstable and double-minded. (James 1:5-8, NIV)

If we are going to be spiritually mature, we are going to have to engage our minds to be stable in our thinking, and believing of the truth.

But have you ever considered that to grow in spiritual maturity you must recruit your body as well? On the one

hand, the state of our body may seem minimally important, as it is only a temporary vessel. On the other hand, the state of our body is critically important in helping us to be both physically able and mentally stable. God created us as body, mind, and spirit; and each of these aspects of our being impacts the other two.

The state of your body affects the stability of your mind.

What you do with your body — your daily health habits — has an impact on your ability to think clearly and control your emotions, both of which are needed for growth in spiritual maturity.

Consider how your daily health habits impact your mental stability:

Eating

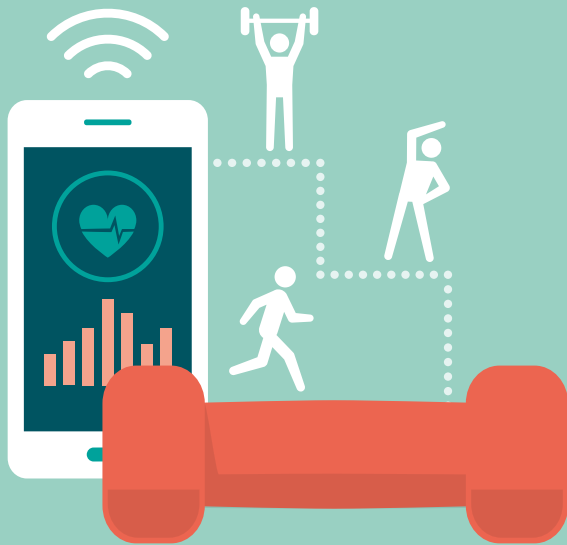
While your brain accounts for about 2% of your body weight, it uses about 20% of the energy produced by your body. For optimal brain function, your body needs whole foods — good sources of healthy carbohydrates, proteins, and fats — as opposed to unhealthy processed foods, which can lead to inflammation. Inflammation, in turn, can contribute to mood disorders. In addition, it’s estimated that about 95% of your body’s supply of serotonin (a neurotransmitter that acts as a mood stabilizer) is produced by gut bacteria, making the consumption of dietary fiber (from real foods) and fermented foods (sauerkraut, Greek yogurt, sourdough bread) desirable. What you eat is important, but also important is when you eat. We’ve all experienced becoming “hangry” (hungry + angry) — becoming mentally fatigued and emotionally irritated when our blood sugar levels drop.

What did you eat yesterday, and how did it impact the way you felt and functioned mentally and emotionally

Hydrating

Your brain is over 70% water, and the cells in your brain depend on water to carry out their functions. Even slight dehydration can interfere with clear thinking by making it harder for us to focus and maintain attention.

How much water did you drink yesterday, and did it impact your ability to clearly focus on and evaluate your thoughts and emotions?



Moving

Physical activity decreases stress hormones that can have a negative impact on your mental state. Physical activity also increases the release of endorphins (the “feel good” hormones) that can boost your mood. Physical activity has also been shown to have a positive impact on preventing and managing mood disorders such as depression and anxiety.

How much did you move your body yesterday, and what impact did it have on your ability to manage your thoughts and emotions, especially when stressed?

Resting

Adequate sleep is necessary for optimal mental functioning. It’s not without reason that sleep deprivation has been used as an interrogation technique. When we are sleep deprived, we become both physically and mentally exhausted. Adequate sleep is needed so the brain can enable us to concentrate, learn, problem-solve, process emotions and exercise good judgment.

How much sleep did you get last night, and how did it impact where you are mentally and emotionally today?

Spiritual maturity requires mental stability, and your daily health habits have an impact on your ability to examine your thoughts and process your emotions.

Do your health habits help or hinder you in your race toward spiritual maturity? What is one small change you could make today?

Resource: For practical ideas on how you can grow your positive habits in the four key areas of health — Eat, Move, Cope, Rest — please visit the Weary or Well? Resource Page from the 2021 Texas Ministry Conference at <https://www.goodhealthforgoodworks.org/tmcwwresources.html> (Please use password: GH4GW@Eph2:10) ✨

Ginger Hill



Ginger Hill is a Christian wellness speaker, coach, and consultant. She is also the founder of Good Health for Good Works, where she helps the earnest, but often exhausted workers in Christian organizations to take steps toward healthier living so they can serve with energy, excellence, and endurance.

Sources:

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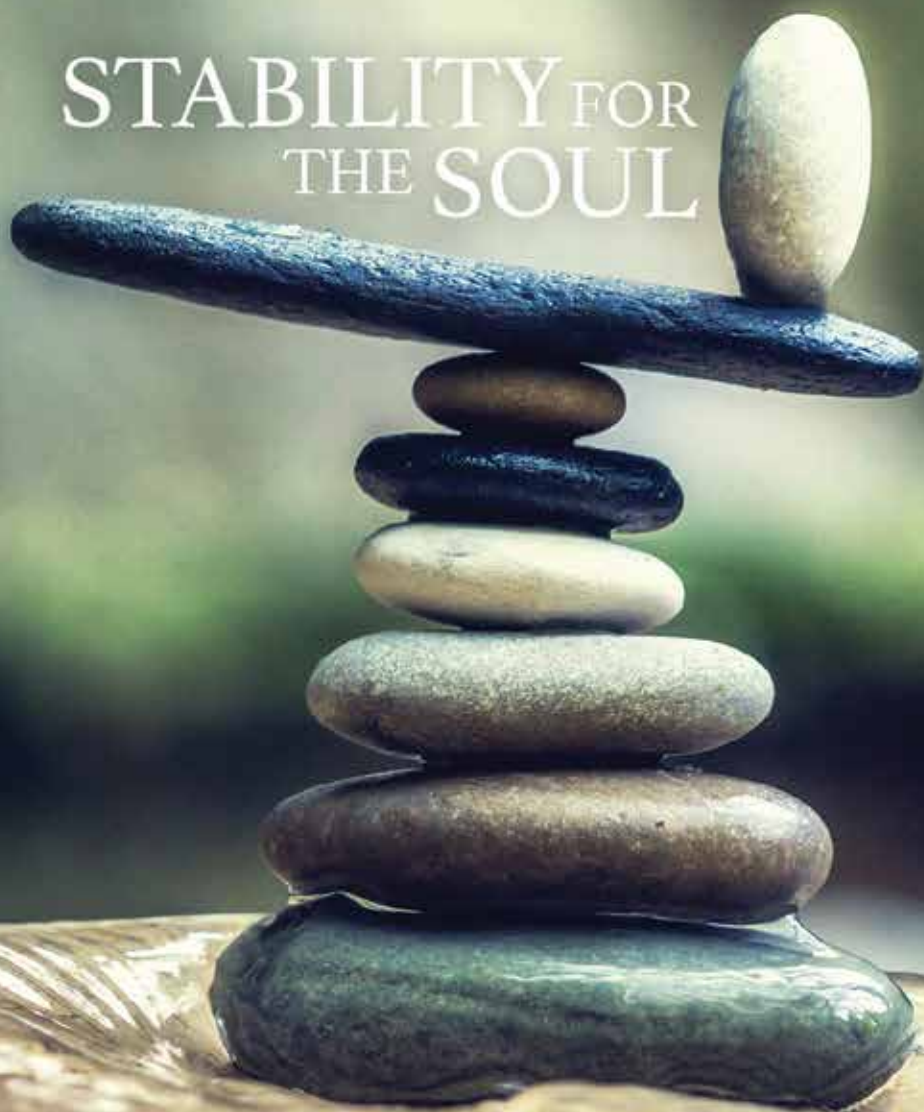
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STABILITY FOR
THE SOUL



Stability: *The state or quality of being stable; resistance to deterioration, consistency of character or purpose; steadfastness.*

Soul: *The spiritual part of a person believed to give life to the body; the essential or most important part of something.*

Two characteristics of God are holiness and glory. As we look all around us, we learn of His glory when we see what He has created. But to understand His holiness (His heart characteristics) we must know Him on a personal level. When we know Him personally, we become steadfast, resisting the storms that come our way in life.

Some people find stability in their work or a hobby. Others may identify stability with their family or spouse. While those things are noteworthy, they are only temporal and do not bring about lasting stability. Many will never know the heart of God because they are more in love with the world in which they live.

As Christians, we can enjoy hobbies, family, and work; but we also know that true stability is found in the heart of God, not in the temporal things. David, in the Old Testament, sought God's heart. He had a great desire to know God. We ought to desire a quality stable state of our soul. How do we do that? And what are some challenges that go along with keeping our soul stable and fixed on eternal values?

At a recent Executive Staff Retreat, we discussed this very thing and provided our thoughts as to the following questions:

1. How do you find stability with your walk with God?

John Hagarty: I think for all Christians, foundationally, the answer to this question is rooted in the same things — regular Bible reading, a consistent prayer life, and, as the Scriptures have commanded, actively attending and serving in a local church. Practically, what does that look like?

Some have a Bible reading plan they stick to, some choose a book of the Bible and read, and others just open it and choose a text. I have been known to do all of these depending on the season of life I am in. However, when it comes to reading Scripture, what I find most helpful is not just reading it, but also meditating on it. With regards to prayer, some people have a specific time and place that they do it. As regimented as I am, there are still seasons in life when I can't just regularly sit down and pray. So, I find myself being prayerful throughout the day — when I am driving to work, going to the grocery store, or while I am doing dishes, for example. These are precious times when I can

communicate with God to strengthen my soul. Furthermore, regular church attendance has kept me anchored in the Lord and edified through fellowship with my brothers and sisters in Christ. Lastly, regular exercise is very important for stability in my walk with God. Having that as a routine helps me to keep my mind right. It positively affects me emotionally, which also positively impacts me spiritually.

Amy Cargle: One of the most important lessons I have learned as an adult is to focus on and build my relationship with God. What this looks like to me is finding time with Him each day in prayer, in His Word, and in worship. My love languages with God are worship and prayer, and I find my walk is not stable without time in both. I don't limit my time in either — you may find me worship and praying while driving, or I might be praying while waiting in line. I have learned that stability for my soul requires frequent prayer with my Savior.

Also, when I was on church staff, we often asked each other how we were feeding our souls versus how we were feeding our flesh. Many times, I noticed that I could easily answer how I was feeding my flesh — whether watching TV, reading books, or scrolling through social media — essentially, anything that was a distraction from God. Because those questions had such an impact on my walk with God, I ask myself the questions weekly. Now, when I find that I am feeding my flesh more than I am feeding my soul, I make a concerted effort to prioritize time with God so that my relationship is more stable.

Patti Malott: For me, it is a continual pursuit of knowing God. Even though I have read through the entire Bible many times, I strive to know God more and more. The more I know God personally, the more I know His heart. I have several different versions of the Bible, and I love the contrasting and comparing. I am a night person, so I find meditating on God's Word at night works best for me. In the mornings I like listening to the Word through my Bible app, DWELL, as I get ready for work. Learning Greek and Hebrew through my weekly Bible study at church has helped me go much deeper into God's Word.

A pastor at our church taught a 6-week class on prayer that really resonated with me, and I now find myself more focused on praying for spiritual healing than physical needs. For years I had just special times each day where I would pray. Now, prayer is so much a part of me that I find it easy praying throughout the whole day as God puts people and circumstances on my heart. God has blessed me with

a team of Christian co-workers, and it's such a joy to be able to pray together. One place I love to worship God is in my car through singing of the hymns and songs that have rich theology in the words. Another important thing to me as a Christian is corporate worship with my church body. I look forward to studying God's Word together and fellowshiping with other believers.

2. What are some ways your stability is challenged?

John Hagarty: I would argue that a universal way stability is challenged is our sin. Sin distracts and detours us from a healthy relationship with the Lord and other people. It causes us to be burdened and impacts our consciences. Aside from that, from personal experience, I can say that being a seminary student has a unique challenge. People often think seminary students are constantly in the Word of God and learning theology, so they must be spiritually stronger than the average Christian. Sadly, what can develop is a gradual numbness to the Word of God. It is read, heard, and discussed so often that it becomes impenetrable. It begins to affect not only our personal devotion, but also our time in church when listening to a sermon or Bible study. Becoming dull to the Scripture is a huge challenge for seminary students, and even people involved in well-taught churches.

Amy Cargle: We each have our own challenge(s) that compete with our stability in God and throughout our life; those may change over time. For me, personally, it's the busyness of life and work. For most of my working adult life, I have been a workaholic, trying to find my identity through accomplishments, degrees, and my job. Probably in the last five years I've realized this sobering truth. This realization has caused me to analyze the temporal nature of these accomplishments and recognize that, while I can receive all the accolades in the world, if my walk with God is not stable, or I am not walking with God at all, the eternal impact will be much less.

Patti Malott: For me, I must work hard at not allowing my love for serving our CO+OP, staff, and churches in our organization to overshadow my time and attention to God. As a detailed person and forward thinker, my mind is always on the "what's next" and the details that need to be done. Busyness is not always healthy if we crowd out our time for knowing God more. We can be busy, but for the wrong purposes. I must keep my priorities in balance and keep the focus on eternal things, not the temporal. Praying comes more naturally for me, but I find that I must schedule my Bible study and meditation just like I do appointments at work.

As Christians, we can enjoy hobbies, family, and work, but we also know that true stability is found in the heart of God, not in the temporal things.



3. How do you overcome those challenges?

John Hagarty: The way I must overcome this challenge is to constantly preach to myself. I preach to myself that I have the privilege to read and hear God's Word regularly, and I must approach it as a worshipful time. When I am preparing for a Bible lesson or a sermon, it's a worshipful time. I can't lose sight of that. If I lose sight of that, I lack stability. It is easy to become a double-minded man who's unstable in all his ways. Therefore, I consider the challenge, I consider the greatness of the God I serve, and I press on, striving to run the race and fight the good fight. It takes constancy and, for a guy like me, a healthy regimen to keep me stable.

Amy Cargle: It comes back to the basics. For me to overcome challenges to my stability with God, I must be in the Word, I must be in prayer, and I must be in worship. Another important component for me to overcome these challenges includes family time in prayer and in worship, ensuring that our marriage and family have God planted in the center. Because stressors can pull one of us out of alignment easily, we must frequently check in with each other to ensure God is the center of our marriage and our joint focus is on Him. I am reminded of the song, "Simple Pursuit" which states, "God, take us back to an unswerving faith in the power of Your name, a heart beating for Your kingdom to reign." It truly is the simple pursuit of God's love, His grace, His mercy, and His faithfulness that helps me overcome challenges to my stability.

Patti Malott: I overcome these challenges by keeping close to God through worship, prayer, and reading His Word. As I mentioned above, I schedule Bible reading and meditation, and my Bible app reminds me each morning to keep up the habit of listening to God's Word. I seek His heart daily by pursuing intimacy with Christ and Christlikeness. I keep a prayer journal and pray as things come up throughout the day. Maintaining my joy in the Lord is part of my spiritual stability. Philippians 4:4 says, "Rejoice in the Lord always." Paul taught in Galatians 5:22 that the fruit of the Spirit is joy. When I live by the Spirit, I will not gratify the desires of my sinful nature. When I seek God's heart and obey His commandments through His Word, I am worshipping God and will bear fruit, one of which is joy. I choose my friends carefully and surround myself with those who are likeminded on spiritual matters — those who hold me accountable in my spiritual walk. God also blessed me with a husband who not only encourages me, but also helps keep me grounded and focused on what really matters in life.

In Summary

While each of us have a different journey with God, our stability in God may look different, and the struggles and challenges identified above are different, there were two consistent themes throughout:

1. To have stability for our souls, we must continually seek God's heart by knowing Him more.
2. We know God more by spending time in His Word, meditating on His Word, praying, and being obedient to His commands.
3. In the end, our spiritual stability comes from a continual pursuit of God.

We encourage you to ask yourself and your team members the same questions we asked ourselves. Our hope is that you anchor your soul in Christ, desire to know Him personally, and build stability for your soul. ✚

Patti Malott



Patti joined the CO+OP team in March of 2013 as Executive Director/CEO and has a passion for helping churches, schools, and ministries steward their resources for maximum Kingdom impact. She also enjoys helping others reach their potential as they use their God-given gifts. You can reach her at patti@churchco-op.org.

John Hagarty



John joined the CO+OP team in 2015 and currently serves as the Director of Member/Vendor Relations where he leads the team of Relationship Managers who connect our approved CO+OP vendors with our CO+OP members. John also heads our marketing division as we communicate to our members the many services and discounts offered by our vendors. You can reach him at john@churchco-op.org.

Amy Cargle



Amy served as the CO+OP Chief Operating Officer for a short interim before she and her family relocated to Florida. You can reach Amy at aecargle11@gmail.com.



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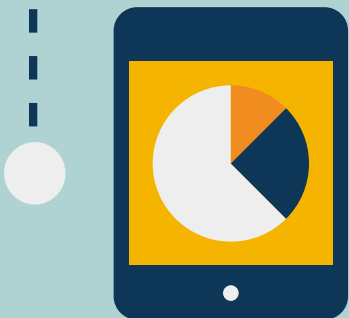
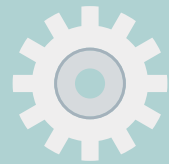
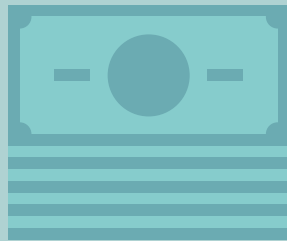
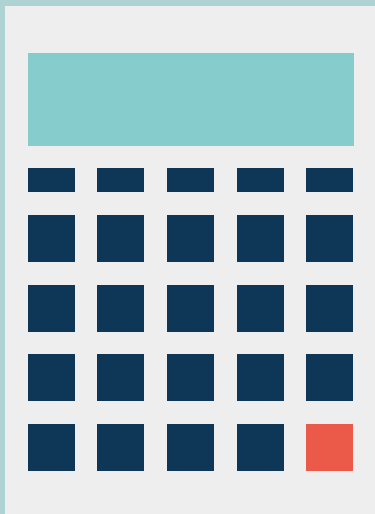
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STABILITY IN FINANCIAL POLICIES

by Ken Emert



Christian organization, do you know where your money is going? Are you sure? According to an article from Brotherhood Mutual, "Increasing at an annual rate of more than six percent, researchers expect fraud committed against the church worldwide to reach the \$80 billion mark by 2025. That's still not the whole picture. Most cases of church fraud go unreported and therefore are not included in the statistics." The estimated fraud for 2019 was \$68 billion. Compare that with \$60 billion given to worldwide missions.

Have you ever heard a statement that has stuck with you over time? For me, it was a small group meeting years ago with Dr. Henry Brandt, a Christian psychologist who made the statement, "People don't do what you expect; they do what you inspect." I have never forgotten that statement.

So how does that statement apply to the stability of your church's finances? Your church's goal should be to protect the contributions that are entrusted to it and protect your employees from any appearance of impropriety or misappropriation of funds.

Your plan should include:

- Strong internal control policies
- Realistic budget for income and expenses

Let's look at policies that should be considered. It is understood that there is a greater challenge for smaller organizations, but the following should still be considered:

Tithes and offerings

- How are tithes and offerings collected? While the pandemic has caused many donors to give online, there are still those who bring their offerings to church.
- Where is the money stored until it is counted?
- Who counts the offerings? How big is your counting team? Can couples count together? Is it the same people who count every week?
- How are cash and checks delivered to the bank?
- How are your online contributions processed?
- Who enters contributions into your CMS?
- Do you verify that your CMS totals equal the total recorded in your accounting system?

Non-contribution Income

- Do individual ministries collect money? If so, where is the money stored?
- How often is it to be turned into accounting?
- What is your policy for ministries using cash collected to pay for expenses? It should be that all funds collected must be turned into accounting. Are funds stored in a secure location until processing?

Church Credit Cards

- Who on staff receives a church credit card?
- What is your policy for turning in credit card receipts? What are the consequences of not following your policies?
- What are acceptable expenses that can be charged on a card? Are there limits?
- What are your policies for meals and entertainment, i.e., charges for alcohol, ministry staff meetings, etc.?
- Who monitors the credit card accounts for fraud?

Accounts Payable

- What documentation is required?
- Do you pay from invoices only and not from statements?
- Who approves invoices for payment?
- Who are your authorized check signers? The persons processing the invoices for payment should not have check signing authority.
- If you make payments online, who is authorized to make those payments, and what documentation is required?
- What is your policy for securing unused check stock? Is it kept in a secure location?
- Are checks ever made out to "Cash"? This should NEVER be done!!!
- Who are your authorized check signers? These should not be the same people who process payables and print the checks.
- Are the check signers provided with the backup documentation when signing checks, and do they review the backup? NOTE: Signers should never sign checks made out to themselves.
- What is your policy on holding checks after they have been printed?

Payroll

- Do you have a payroll service? If so, what are your guarantees that the tax deposits are being properly made?
- If you process your own payroll, what is your policy for making your tax deposits?
- Are hourly employees' time sheets monitored for reasonableness?
- Are all the payroll-related reports being processed?

Bank Reconciliations

- Are all saving and checking accounts reconciled monthly?
- Is the person reconciling the accounts different from the check signers?
- Are the reconciled accounts then reviewed by a third party?
- Are expenses compared to budget monthly?
- Are monthly reports prepared for your ministry decision makers?

Accounting Personnel

- Is church membership required?
- Do you run background and credit checks on your accounting staff?
- Are accounting staff required to take vacations?
- What is your policy on cross-training your accounting staff?

Your ministry supporters want to know that their funds are being used to further the purposes of your ministry. Sound financial policies and strong internal controls minimize the risk of fraud or embezzlement. The last thing any church wants is to make the news for financial inequities. +

Ken Emert



Ken Emert is currently on the staff of Pure Heart Church where he has served as the Business Administrator for the past 10 years. Prior to that he did CMS software training and was on the staff at Scottsdale Bible Church for 21 years. While his job is working with numbers, his passion is working with youth. He is currently the Crew Leader of 7th grade and sophomore boys. He started

working with his sophomores when they went into 6th grade. His goal is to stick with each group until they graduate. Ken is a widower and has three children and five grandchildren.



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Texas Ministry ConferenceSM

2022 Recap

Learning Together
Networking Together
Visiting CO+OP Alley Together



I'm six months into the ministry. I don't know up from down. I'm a millennial — I can Google something if I need information. What this conference offered me was far more valuable: shared experience, consolation, and outside-the-box thinking. Thank you for your time, efforts, and prayers.

Pastor Micah JJ Drengler, Living Word Lutheran Church

The CO+OP has been an extremely helpful tool since we joined many years ago. The TMC we have attended every year except the 2021 Virtual. Our entire staff attends — school, church, and support staff. We never leave without practical, immediately employable concepts to streamline things or help us implement or grow in ministry areas.

Dr. Bruce Northam (Senior Pastor), Clay Road Baptist Church



This was my first conference. When I was in college, I was a part of an international honor society. This event gives me that same feeling. A feeling of family, inclusiveness, fun, and faith. I love opportunities to learn and fellowship. Everybody here is so welcoming and inviting. The volunteers are great and go above and beyond to make my experience top-notch. The food was so incredible.

*Chelsea Steele (Financial Secretary),
First Baptist Church Brenham*

I brought my friends and they really liked it. They want to come back every year. This is a great way to get resources, and meet vendors and new people. Also, John Blunt from TES lowered my electrical bill on the spot! Yay!

*Kelley Lewis (Secretary/Treasurer),
The Pentecostals of West Houston*

The first year I came to TMC it was great to learn the tools available to a church. Seven years later, I'm staying up to date with the new tools and vendors that support my function in the church office. I'm always astounded to hear how other churches operate. Most important, the CO+OP recognizes there is a business component to running a church, not just ministry.

*Lorrie Castle (Office Manager),
St. Philip Presbyterian Church*

Since I am starting a new position, this conference was just what I needed. The workshop topics were wonderful, and the presenters went above and beyond to help individuals as well as the class as a whole. I can't wait until next year!

Jodi Jones (Financial Manager), Encourager Church



For a complete list of TMC prize winners, please visit our website at texasministryconference.org!



The CO+OP is a place where I feel I strengthen myself spiritually and secularly. I take teachings that I have gotten at CO+OP into my life to improve my living. A few years ago, I took a class on the importance of a sabbatical time. It is very important to rest my body and mind, which is something that I feel helps me live a better life.

Dimas Parada (Custodian), St. Philip Presbyterian Church

The Texas Ministry Conference is by far the best one-day conference for church leaders that everyone should attend at some time if not every year.

*Rick Cadden (Pastor of Business Administration),
First Baptist Church Burleson*



This is my first time at TMC and an event that has been put on by the CO+OP. My first impression was an eye-opener, in a great way! The beautiful venue here at Champion Forest is a great selection for this vast event. All of the volunteers were so nice, respectful on top of being knowledgeable, helpful for assisting a first-time attendee around this amazing conference. . . . The vendors and speakers were helpful, informative, and extremely approachable. During lunch today, I got to call my boss to tell her we need more people to attend this next year because this is a place that presents great resources and also allows churches, schools, and various other organizations to collaborate and share knowledge and experiences. I am looking forward to coming back next year and many years to come!

*Brandon Krus (Facilities Coordinator),
St. Mark's Episcopal School & Church*



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Networking, Lunch, and Learning Together



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"Life-giving leaders know that context explains conduct. They improve habits, attitudes, and performance through environments and cultures. Wise leaders establish customers, values, and language to shape behavior." - Tim Elmore



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Meet Our Newest Team Members



Tia Malott

Tia Malott joined Team CO+OP in February 2022 – the day before the Texas Ministry Conference! Tia joins the team as an Administrative Assistant. Tia grew up in Spring, TX, where she lives with her family.

Below are some fun facts Tia shared about herself:

Three words to describe Tia would be hard-working, practical, and teachable. Tia does her best thinking when her hands are busy. Tia has played the piano since she was six years old, and you should see her collection of sheet music! Her dream vacation is skiing in the mountains!

She enjoys exercising in her spare time and spending time with her niece and nephew, as they always make her smile! Tia is an avid reader, and the last book she read was *The Death of Ivan Ilych* by Leo Tolstoy. She tries not to miss *All Creatures Great and Small* on TV and loves watching *The Sound of Music* or *Pride and Prejudice*.

When Tia is cruising around in her car, she is either thinking out loud or listening to a podcast. And she will never leave home without her ChapStick!

Tia believes there could never be enough fall weather. She says the best thing about her role at the CO+OP is that she can free up others to focus on what is most important to them. ✦



Ryan Fryar

Ryan Fryar joined Team CO+OP in April 2022 as the Relationship Manager for the Dallas and Fort Worth area. Ryan grew up in the Spring area where he now lives with his wife. They are expecting their first child later this year.

Below are some fun facts Ryan shared about himself:

Ryan shared that the three words that best describe him include driven, easy-going, and relatable. He does his best thinking when he is in the shower. His dream vacation would find him on a beach in Cancun eating shrimp tacos.

Ryan always smiles when he looks at his beautiful wife and watches the Cowboys lose. The last book he read was *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. His all-time favorite movie is *The Green Mile*, and his favorite TV show is *The Office*.

When Ryan is cruising around in his car, he likes hitting those high notes like there is no tomorrow. If you ask him what there could never be enough of, he will share with you how much he loves Louisiana hot sauce. However, you would never catch him eating raw tomatoes or onion rings.

If you saw Ryan sitting at his office desk, you would also find his gallon jug of water, which he says he never leaves home without. Ryan says the best thing about his role at the CO+OP is that he can hardly contain his excitement! ✦

Feel free to reach out to Tia or Ryan anytime at 832.478.5131. They will be happy to serve you!



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Big State Electric was established in 1966 and is licensed to operate in Texas by both the Texas Department of License and Regulation, and Texas Board of Professional Engineers as a Design Build & Design Assist Electrical Contractor. For over 55 years, Big State Electric has continued growing to sales over \$180 Million.

With the President and CEO, and three Vice Presidents making up our leadership team (compiling over 90 years of experience), Big State Electric has been able to continue to grow in upwards of over \$100 million in electrical work. We have also expanded our offices into several Texas markets including the San Antonio Region, Austin Region, Houston Region, and the Corpus Region. We have over 676 employees and a bonding capacity of \$30 million per project.

Big State Electric has a full-time Safety Director at each of our locations throughout the state. Our overall safety program focuses on the three basic concepts to ensure the safety and health of each employee – training, oversight, and accountability. As a result, we have NOT been involved in instances that have reached a level of formal mediation, arbitration, or litigation since Vincent Real has owned the company.

We have the experience and capacity to handle all your electrical needs. We have the manpower and the equipment to do everything from managing your facility, troubleshooting your smallest issue, to designing and building your new large electrical projects. We have also received many compliments from industry partners and friends that our company management and field personnel differ from our competitors for these reasons:

- Knowledgeable and professional
- Well prepared in advance
- Accessible and available during and after business hours

- Deliver more than the minimum daily
- Work through problems and develop solutions
- Outstanding quality installations
- Consistency from start to finish
- 'Can do' and 'whatever it takes' attitude
- Partner well with other subcontractors

Big State Electric is a strong advocate of employing project-specific quality plans and quality customer service. We subscribe to the practice of continuous improvement, and we base our ongoing quality efforts on a documented "lessons learned" approach that captures and transfers information to our staff from project to project and client to client.

As the initial step, we work with each individual client to identify their specific definition of quality as it applies to the project at hand. We believe this situational definition of quality comes within the context of accepted norms that are embodied in quality standards. From there, we further develop specific quality goals with the Team in our standardized means and methods to exceed jobsite expectations and customer satisfaction.

Big State Electric specializes in electrical construction and 24/7 electrical services. We provide a complete and value-based approach with design/build capabilities to all service and construction projects. Our scope of work covers a broad range of projects including but not limited to commercial, industrial, medical, high-tech, educational, municipal, and institutional. Big State Electric's facilities & service department works with our customers, owners, and partners to ensure their emergencies are met with a rapid response in order to reduce downtime and negative effects on productivity.


Big State Electric has over five decades of proven experience in safely completing projects under budget while also meeting the owners' technical requirements. Our services include:

- Electrical Services, Maintenance, and Preventative Maintenance Services
- Emergency Power Systems
- Complete Systems Analysis, including NFPA 70 E Compliance
- Energy Analysis, Observation of Systems to Ensure Customer is Getting the Best Direction for Lowering the Building Systems Cost to Operate
- 24-hour Emergency Service
- Infrared Scanning
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Humble Elevator Service, Inc.

Humble Elevator Service, Inc. was established in 1985 by Jack Parks, Sr. and his wife, Barbara Parks. From the beginning, the company serviced, modernized, and repaired many different models and types of elevator units and components. Today we practice the same business philosophy that the company opened its doors with years ago and maintain our family-owned style of operation and culture. We offer all the services that any larger company would offer but on a more personalized level. We have a live operator answering the phones 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including all holidays. We have the same focus on all elevator field services as we did on day one — safety for all passengers. We utilize the most stringent inspectors to inspect our work to provide the end-user with the safest elevator experience available.

As a business philosophy, we believe in providing quality monthly maintenance visits, which enable our customers' elevators to have the most uptime possible. In providing this level of preventative maintenance we are keeping the elevators in good working condition and reducing the amount of service calls needed. In other words, we are more proactive than reactive when it comes to elevator maintenance.

Our employees, whether they are in the field or in the office, are like family to us, which keeps each valuable team member with us long-term. This is beneficial in building lasting relationships with customers, as well as maintaining reliable and knowledgeable personnel. The consistency we have with our field and office personnel makes a positive impact, as we often hear from potential customers how frustrating it is for mechanics to change,

sales representatives to change, or even to have changes in supervisors. Having the same people as members of our company year after year makes a substantial difference in providing our customers with premium customer service.

Our customer service is top notch because we genuinely care about our customers. We offer personalized service and value our customer relationships. We do our best to respond professionally and with empathy for what our customers are needing and offer responses as efficiently as possible. Our viewpoint is that every customer represents an opportunity for Humble Elevator to prove our commitment to honesty, integrity, and the establishment of long-lasting relationships.

Our responsiveness to our customers' needs is top level in this industry as well as our responsiveness to any potential customer for conversations and surveys. We pride ourselves on responding quickly, presenting ourselves in a professional manner, and striving to provide the potential customer with the best practical solutions.

When it comes to customer service, our top three goals are:

- 1) Be there when our customers call and do our best to resolve any issues. We respond as quickly as possible to service requests.
- 2) Be honest with customers about the status of their elevator(s) and what services are needed. We do not try to sell services or parts that our customers don't need.

3) Be easy to work with and communicate with our customer. Doing the basics, like keeping maintenance logs up to date and emailing job tickets to our customers, are examples of the helpful and appreciated service we provide.

Humble Elevator Service is known for being well-rounded in all aspects of the elevator industry whether it be new construction, modernization, repair, or service. What sets our mechanics apart from other companies is the fact that they have experience in all these fields. At larger companies, mechanics are typically assigned to one of these four departments. Mechanics at other companies may be skilled in their direct department but may, however, lack experience in other departments of the trade due to lack of exposure in those areas of the industry. At Humble Elevator we have the ability to send any mechanic we have on any type of call or situation that may arise.

Part of that ability comes from the fact that Humble Elevator is a union company. The International Union of Elevator Constructors has long stood as the gold standard for quality work in the elevator industry. The Union is currently the only comprehensive apprentice training program that introduces each new member to all aspects of the trade. This school is five years long and requires the technicians to pass an extensive test before becoming a Full Mechanic. The Union tracks each individual technician's progress and requires companies to adhere to policies that only allow trained technicians that are proficient with elevator troubleshooting to work on the elevators. When we are asked, "Why Union?" the answer is simple. It is the only avenue, in this line of work, where technicians' extensive training is recorded, then assessed for Mechanics status before they are approved to work on passenger elevators where others' lives are at stake.

After 36+ years in business, Humble Elevator Service, Inc. remains dedicated to providing the highest quality of elevator service to our customers while maintaining a level of customer service that is incomparable.



Humble Elevator Service, Inc.

We offer a full range of services for all your elevator needs:

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Belinda Davis 281.379.2665
bdavis@cfacservice.com

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John Blunt 866.948.5720 x103 DFW
john@tesenergyservices.com
Michael Bernstein 866.948.5720
mbernstein@tesenergyservices.com

FACILITIES & OPERATIONS

Big State Electric
bigstateelectric.com
David Phares 713.898.3743
david.phares@bigstateelectric.com

Chamberlin Roofing & Waterproofing
chamberlinltd.com
Lilly Supplee 713.425.9050
lsupplee@chamberlinltd.com

High Access Solutions
wereachhigh.com
Paul Ptak 817.243.6800
paul@wereachhigh.com

Humble Elevator Services, Inc.
humbleelevator.com
Bill Amenson 281.540.2698
sales@humbleelevator.com

Imperial Utilities and Sustainability, Inc.
imperialsustainability.com
Paul Brokhin 713.206.1565
pbrokhin@imperialsustainability.com

Integrity Furniture Solutions
integrityfurniture.com
integrityfurniture.com
Drew Coleman 888.398.8897
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mityinc.com
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FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

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Jordan Becker, AVP
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jordan.becker@frostbank.com
Jeff Nuckols, SVP
713.388.1138
jeff.nuckols@frostbank.com

FINANCIAL SERVICES

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Jordan Telenko 610.401.4993
jtelenko@apspayroll.com

Ratliff & Associates, PC
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Mr. Ashley Voss 817.332.3222
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mfeagin1@comcast.net

Insurance One Agency
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Gary Benson 281.350.6277 HOU
garyb@insuranceoneagency.com
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pburns@insuranceoneagency.com
Rick McCrary 972.267.8000 DFW
rick@insuranceoneagency.com
Joe Hutchison 210.402.0288 SA
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Frost Bank, Public Finance Division

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Jordan Becker, AVP

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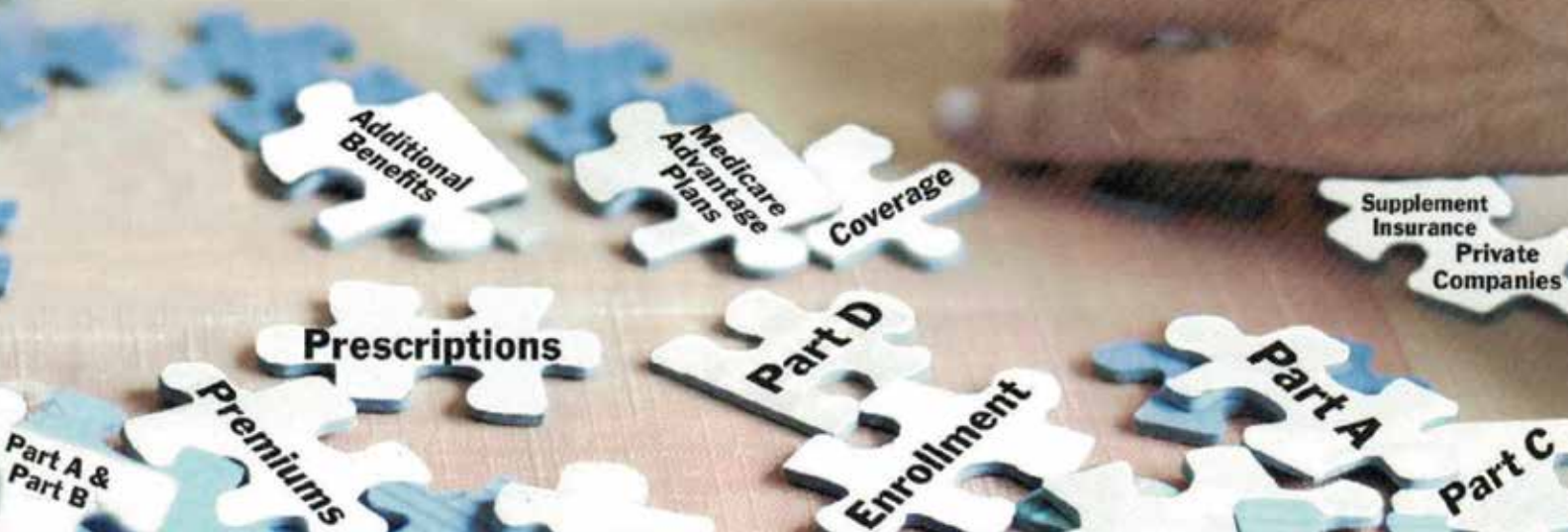
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