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Knowing our Purpose

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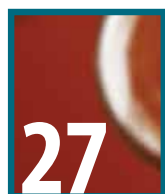
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Keep your contact information current. The lifeline of communication to our members is through correct contact information, i.e. key contact names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Send all updates to patti@churchco-op.org. Help us keep you informed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

Whenever I travel I make sure to have a few CO+OP Informational packets with me since I love sharing the CO+OP story to ministries along my journey. This past October was no exception. I couldn't get good internet at the place we were staying so I drove to the restaurant in town to do a little work.

As I typed away on the computer, I noticed a couple kept looking over my way where the Texas Ministry Conference workshops were spread out on the table. After finishing breakfast, the couple came over, introduced themselves and inquired about my intense typing. "What in the world is so important to keep you inside on a beautiful day like this?" the husband, Tom, asked.

After I explained the urgency of completing the Texas Ministry Conference workshops so our brochure could go to print, I went on to tell about our conference and share the story of the CO+OP. Tom and Sara grew up in a farming community. They were part of a farmer's co-op for years and clearly understood the benefit of bringing resources together to save money. Tom shook his head to make it known that he "got it" when I told him we were a nonprofit CO+OP formed to help save ministry dollars. As he and his wife headed for the door, he looked back and said, "Never stop telling that CO+OP story...it really is good stewardship!"

We never want to lose the focus and purpose of the CO+OP—to save you ministry dollars. Because of our focus, and desire for excellence in all we do, we have created a new Marketing Manager position. You won't want to miss reading about John Hagarty on page 38. John works closely with our Connection Partners in providing leadership, training and strategic planning so that we can continue to provide excellent service to our members.

Speaking of purpose, that is the theme of this entire issue. It is packed full of articles addressing the many different angles of purpose including an article from one of the top trial lawyers in America, Mark Lanier. He addresses vital principals in finding our purpose.

Don't forget to make plans to attend our annual Texas Ministry Conference on February 16, 2017. We have a terrific lineup of speakers and workshop topics that will enhance your ministry role. For more information, go to www.texasministryconference.org.

Grab a cup of your favorite fall drink or snack, kick up your feet, and enjoy the next several pages of your CO+OP magazine.

Together We Are Purposeful!

Patti Malott
Executive Director



Connecting People and Resources

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- Acting as your liaison and advocate in time of need
- Helping cultivate mutually beneficial relationships between vendors and members
- Providing excellent networking experiences
- Providing educational opportunities at a reduced rate through our annual Texas Ministry ConferenceSM using national and local relevant speakers
- Meeting the needs of others through our Nonprofit Organization

Learn more about the CO+OP at www.churchco-op.org or call **832-478-5131**.



www.TexasMinistryConference.org

The purpose of the Texas Ministry Conference is to provide tools and resources for those who serve in churches, schools and nonprofit organizations. This includes 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 Conference is held the third Thursday of each February.

Learn more about how you can benefit from attending this conference at www.TexasMinistryConference.org or calling **832-478-5131**.

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By Michael Bernstein

Saving Ministry Dollars Helps Ministries Carry Out Their Purpose

TES Energy Services, LP (TES) bases its business on two important principles: building trustworthy relationships with clients and finding the lowest rates available to contract. These principles allow ministries to save money that can be used to carry out their purposes.

How do we build trustworthy relationships? To begin with, we put our clients' interests first. If the market price for electricity or natural gas goes down while a client has a future contract in place, we make every effort to blend and extend the contracted rate to make it lower. Although this requires more work on our behalf, the client gains the savings and that provides them with more ministry dollars.

We are also concerned with providing the best customer service for every nonprofit client no matter the size. We put the same energy and enthusiasm into closing a great price and leaving the client satisfied for the largest account as we do for the smallest. Because of this, most of our clients stay with us for the long term. Long-standing relationships allow us to really get to know our clients, their ministry purpose and the best way to serve them.

An overlooked aspect of our customer service is The Energy Professionals Association (TEPA). TES is a charter member of TEPA and its key energy personnel are certified by TEPA to maintain specific standards and practices for member consultants in the energy industry. We donate many volunteer hours to them because we believe having criteria is important so you can be assured that we are following protocols and regulations.

Not only do we strive to gain the trust of our clients, we ultimately want to offer them the lowest energy rates available. No matter if the market trends are going up or down, TES has an experienced staff that will work towards the most economical solution for our clients. Our Principals have over 100 years of combined experience in

the industries of electricity construction and procurement, so we are prepared to offer many strategies to provide the lowest risk on every type of contract available.

Because we have relationships with a multitude of energy providers, we receive updated pricing daily and will negotiate the most competitive rates on your organization's behalf.

We also have access to special discounted "under market rates." Usually this happens if a provider comes to us with a block of kWh that they need to replace and offer at a discount. Our group rate aggregations (combining clients together so there is a large load) can also offer an "under market rate."

We also analyze the market swings to advise your organization to consider either a fixed or variable rate. Depending on the factors involved, we know how to proceed with the contract type that will offer the most savings.

Energy can eat up a vast amount of a church's or other organization's budget. We know that this money could be put to greater use somewhere else. This is why we strive so hard to gain the trust of our clients and secure the lowest rates possible. A win for us is ultimately a win for ministry! ✦



Michael Bernstein

TES Energy Services, LP
Call Toll Free: (888)-948-5720 ext. 103

Michael Bernstein is the CO+OP Account Manager for TES Energy Services, LP (TES). Michael possesses detailed knowledge of the energy industry, along with expertise in sales and marketing, training and development, customer relations operations and non-profit management. He covers the Houston and South Texas areas.



Purposeful Planning

If you step back and think about what prevents you from having a productive day, obstacles that come to mind likely fall into one of three categories.

Obstacle #1: Not enough time

Question: *Am I being the best steward of my time?*

Obstacle #2: Not enough resources (financial, people, etc.)

Question: *Am I being the best steward of my church's resources?*

Obstacle #3: Not enough knowledge

Question: *Am I doing my due diligence in gaining the right (new) information to act and move toward my purpose?*

Among the many benefits technology has provided human civilization, giving us the ability to “do more with less” is clearly at the top of that list. Technological tools allow us to do things faster with fewer resources, and at a fraction of the knowledge required to do those same tasks manually.

Remember going on a trip or vacation with your parents as a child? A large part of traveling to a destination was how to get there. Atlases, maps, directions and planned stops would quickly encumber the navigational process. Now, thanks to technology, all we do is type in (or voice command) an address. A GPS app manages it from there; assisting with the best route to take, the amount of travel time and even detour options; resulting in more time focused on the trip rather than the logistics!

So why aren't we taking advantage of technological tools like this for our places of worship? We've allowed ourselves to believe the above obstacles to be true: we don't have enough time, we don't have enough resources, we don't have enough knowledge. Yet, we better believe a jack-of-all-trades has the right tools in his tool belt, including a GPS app!

We can apply this thinking from another angle: waste. The website, OrganizedWorld.com, states that the average office employee spends 1.5 hours a day (six weeks annually) looking for things. It would be easy to make an argument that 1.5 hours per day looking for things is not the best use of anyone's time. Consider all of the many other tasks that could be accomplished with an extra 1.5 hours per day!

Let's identify a working example. A large percentage of churches across the country still use legal pads or Microsoft Word documents to outline and facilitate their worship flow. This practice results in worship leaders spending countless hours every week via phone calls, email, text messaging or social media, orchestrating and manually updating their volunteers for the next service. It results in an exorbitant amount of facilitation and information sharing amongst those involved, and can result in an exorbitant amount of wasted time.

Do worship leaders know there are online tools that can help organize, plan and expedite the process of creating an efficient work flow? Do they know these tools have proven to save resources and valuable time for all participants involved? Maybe they haven't made the time to research what online options are available to them.

Consider all of the many other tasks that could be accomplished with an extra 1.5 hours per day!

WorshipPlanning.com is one of these tools and can help you plan and organize your church services. You can build worship flows, schedule volunteers and team members, and fine tune details of musical selections from your personalized song libraries. There is also opportunity to attach relevant resource files and maintain communication via your preferred channel: email, Facebook or text messaging. WorshipPlanning.com certainly will make the process of planning your Sunday morning ministry more efficient.

*Grant yourself a place on your schedule to explore where time-consuming duties can be replaced with technological advances.

*Speak to other worship leaders who have tried some of these tools and find out from their perspective what works and what doesn't.

*Bring your own research to the table and introduce others on your team to the resources you have found.

*Don't be afraid to spend the time researching and investing in the tools that will free you from tasks that consume hours of your day.

With easy-to-use online tools like WorshipPlanning.com, you can actually do more and spend less time doing it, allowing you to get to the heart of your ministry, with PURPOSE!! +

Tom Metz



Tom Metz is founder of WorshipPlanning.com. Tom has a professional background in information technology and brings an entire career of expertise in enterprise web and mobile app development, tech solution analysis and project management. You can reach Tom at info@worshipplanning.com

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THE *WHY* BEHIND THE *WHAT:* CHURCH FACILITY MANAGEMENT

By Tim Cool

I am passionate about Facility Stewardship (a term that I believe better describes what we commonly call Facility Management). I like to challenge churches with the concept that our facilities were entrusted to us by God to steward over...just like money.

Facility Stewardship/Management is a task. A role. It is something we do. Something we manage/steward. Something we hire people to perform. It is what we do. But I am afraid I may not have made a good enough case as to why we do it.

Have you ever been asked, "What do you do?" Me too. I am constantly asked what our company does and I usually fumble through a diatribe that puts the questioner to sleep. As inquisitive humans, we are constantly seeking to understand what people, companies, churches, etc. do.

While that may be an important part of evaluating your need to engage in an activity or with an organization, it should be the byproduct of a much more significant question. There is a much more telling question that should be asked.

WHY?

Why do you do what you do?

When consulting with our church clients, we strive to understand this question. We spend a significant amount of time and energy with our clients to explore this. And for them to answer, "*Because we love people and love God,*" is not really specific enough. Why are you a church and *why* do you do things the way you do? That is where the rubber meets the road.

In his book, *Start With Why*, Simon Sinek makes a very compelling argument as to why this question should be the starting point for any organization. He says, "*WHY: Very few people or companies can clearly articulate WHY they do WHAT they do. When I say WHY, I don't mean to make money - that's a result. By WHY I mean what is your purpose, cause or belief? WHY does your company exist? WHY do you get out of bed every morning? And WHY should anyone care?*"

That really challenged me.

So what are the right *why* reasons to be intentional and diligent with your Facility Stewardship/Management of your church facilities? Before we answer that question, let's make sure we understand what facility management is and is not.

A good layman's definition is: Facilities management is the integration of processes within an organization to maintain and develop the agreed services that support and improve the effectiveness of its primary activities.

In a church, those "primary activities" are to minister to the community, minister to the congregation, reach the lost, provide a safe place for people to meet God, etc. In that context, facility management is not merely cleaning floors and taking out the trash...although those may be subsets of the act of facility management. Too often, churches think that because they have a maintenance person or a custodian, that they are performing "facility management." Not so. You may be allocating a person to perform activities that need to be led by a facility manager as a part of a broader facility management initiative, but those tasks are not the crux of facility management.

Here are some examples of the right *why* reasons for your church to be proactive with facility management:

1. God entrusted these facilities to you. They are His and he expects us to be diligent.
2. All of God's physical creation will deteriorate and will need care and/or replacement. This is inevitable. There is no escaping this reality.
3. Facility related expenditures are generally the second largest line item in a church budget; only after staffing.
4. We should be considerate of the health, safety and wellbeing of the staff, congregation and guests who use our facilities.
5. Maintaining facilities is a perpetual activity, not a one-and-done job.
6. Operational costs (utilities, maintenance, janitorial) make up about 80% of the Total Cost of ownership of your church facility over a period of time.

7. Your facility tells a story. What story will it communicate to your guests? One of care and attention or one of a lack of attention? Mark Waltz of Grainger Community states, "When your guests are distracted from the real purpose of their visit to your church, you'll have a difficult time re-engaging them. In order for people to see Jesus, potential distractions must be identified and eliminated." The condition of your facility can be such a distraction.

8. Facilities were intended to facilitate activities. What would happen if your facility was not fully operational? Would it impact your ministries? How many Sundays could your church go without A/C in the worship center in the middle of August?

9. If your home was in disarray, falling apart, had stained carpet or peeling paint, would you be proud to invite people to come over? If you are like me (and maybe I am weird), those things bother me. I do not feel good about myself when my house is not what it could be or should be. Not perfect... just intentionally cared for.

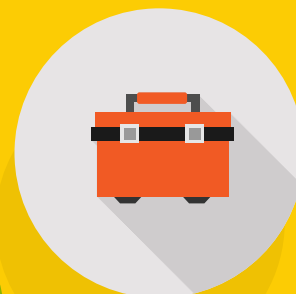
If you have been tasked with the care, longevity, maintenance, life cycle and/or management of your church facilities, you need to take it seriously. Take a minute to read Numbers 3:14-38. Pay specific attention to the fact that it was the Levites, the priests, who were assigned to care for the temple. It was not people at the bottom of the food chain. It was not the unqualified or the lowest paid. It was the priests; those set apart to do God's service. God ordained his chosen priests to manage the "facilities." According to this scripture, there was facility management and facility managers to be in charge of these tasks before there were youth pastors, children's pastors, IT directors, Media directors and so on.

Facility Management is important. Understanding your *why* for the *what* will give you the motivation and fortitude to make it a priority. ✦

Tim Cool



Tim Cool is the Chief Solutions Officer at Cool Solutions Group and has assisted nearly 400 churches (equating to over 4 Million Sq Ft) throughout the US with their facility needs. He has collaborated with churches in the areas of facility needs analysis, design coordination, construction management and life cycle planning/management. Tim is also the "architect" of the eSPACE software solutions. You can reach Tim at info.eSPACE.cool.

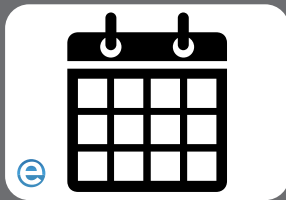


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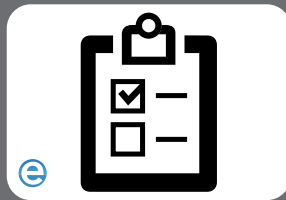


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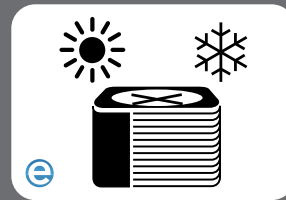
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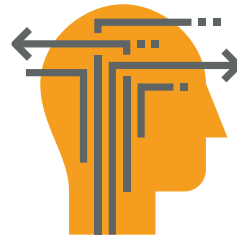


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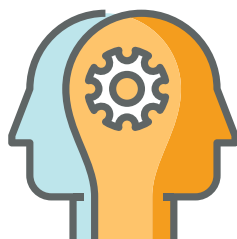
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Knowing our Purpose

One of America's top trial lawyers shares his views

By Mark Lanier



When I was in ninth grade, the Lubbock Independent School District decided all ninth graders should take an aptitude test. It was going to inform us of our skill set and how that should translate into an occupation. This was so we could make intelligent choices of classes to take as we prepared to enter high school (for us, 9th grade was still middle school).

I took the test. The results told me to be either a trial lawyer, a preacher, or a politician. I thought about each job and realized to some degree or another, they all meant that I would get paid for talking. That seemed like a good thing.

I was devout as a Christian at that age. Two years earlier, God had entered my life and profoundly affected me. The preaching route was my first choice, so when college came, I enrolled in a program that was both college and seminary. My “preaching degree” was technically a B.A. in Biblical Languages.

I had an opportunity to preach afterwards, but instead opted to go to law school. One of my mentors told me, “Be a lawyer. You can always teach Sunday school, but then you will be doing it because you want to, and never because you have to.” So off I went to law school.

There were those at law school who were fulfilling their life’s dream. Me? I was just wanting a job to pay the bills so I could preach! It is interesting how God works.

While this article is built from a framework of finding God’s purpose in vocational callings, the principles and premises here have a much broader application. These are principles for finding our way in this life in all aspects of our worship and service to the King of kings.

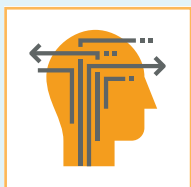
So, how do we find our purpose as a child of God? Is the secret taking an aptitude test, finishing your schooling, and getting good career advice from a mentor? No! That’s not the secret, although it’s certainly a good avenue. It does have elements of the secret, however. Here are my suggestions.



Know that God does have a purpose for you

God doesn’t simply call you and I to be “Christians.” It is much more specific. God calls us with specific things in mind. God didn’t issue his call to Abraham to “be a believer.” God told him to get up and move. God told him where to go and what to do. Some might think this was special attention God gave only to Abraham, and that most others are second-class citizens before God. Nothing could be further from the truth! Psalm 137 explains that God knew us from the womb and had “days” set aside for us before one came to be. We read similarly in the New Testament.

Paul explained to the church at Ephesus that they were to walk in the “good works that God had prepared beforehand” for them (Eph. 2:10). This is an important foundation for finding our purpose: we need to know that there is a purpose! These good works are full and inform different areas of our lives. Whether at home, at school, at work, in social settings, at church, or anywhere else; when we are living and breathing, we can be assured that God has prepared “good works” for us to do.



Consider your talents and interests

God not only seeks to put us into service for specific purposes, but he has imbued us with the talents to do so. That is not to say that God can’t use someone in ways that are outside of his or her comfort zone. Moses wasn’t comfortable speaking in public, but God used him to speak to Pharaoh, to the Israelites, and to many others.

Generally, however, we can rest assured that when God has work for us to do, he prepares us to do that work. Maybe an aptitude test is not the

mechanism we need for finding our talents, but there are a number of similar tests that illuminate our abilities and help inform our callings.

As we consider our talents, we need to buff and polish them. I might have had the makings of a lawyer or preacher, but if I didn’t go to law school or spend time learning God and his word, then I would never find success. So part of finding our purpose before God must include growing in the abilities we wish to bring to his service.



Prayerfully seek out his purposes

There is no replacement for prayer. Prayer works in multiple directions all at once. When we pray, we can move God to action. He waits for us to call out for his blessings and directions. We are to “ask and it will be given to us” (Mt. 7:7). Can God give us blessings and gifts without asking? Of course He can. He is God. But that doesn’t change that we are told to ask. James explored the issues around people not having things they want or need and part of his explanation is, “You do not have, because you do not ask” (James. 4:2).

Prayer also activates our own attention. When we pray, we thoughtfully consider what is at play. We readily put ourselves at God’s service, as we discuss with him the options and what we are trying to figure out. This puts God’s will at the center of our thoughts and not our own wills.

Sometimes through prayer we will see doors open and close. Other times, we will have multiple options with no clarity on what we should do. I believe there are times where God says, “I am glad you have set this before me. I am glad you have shown a readiness and willingness to do whatever I tell you to do. Now that said, I am giving you these two (or more) options for you to decide. You have the right motives, the right concerns, and you will make a good decision that I will bless.”

God’s goal isn’t to make us machines or puppets. God is at work teaching us discernment. God is renewing our minds. God is giving us directions and teaching us how to make decisions. This is a good thing. God told Adam to name the animals. God didn’t tell Adam what to name the animals. We are creative thinking humans. God made us that way. He doesn’t strip that from us. Communing with God in prayer is one way he accomplishes these things in us.



Take counsel

We tend to have tunnel vision, often dictated by what we want, more than what is fitting or what we need. I often have young people come up to me and say, “I want to be a lawyer.” For some, that is probably a good career choice. For others, however, I can fairly well see that they aren’t suited for it. If you want to be a lawyer, you better enjoy reading, taking tests, thinking logically, studying long hard hours, and living with a lot of stress. And that’s just to make it out of law school!

So I am quick to tell some folks, “Don’t be a lawyer! You may think you want to do it because you see lawyers and like what you see, but that doesn’t make it right for you!”

Scripture teaches us that “The heart is deceitful above all things” (Jer. 17:9). It is a powerful check to get godly counsel from others. “Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed” (Prov. 15:22). Be close to godly people. It is a great reason to be plugged into a local church fellowship. You and I can find people, like my mentor from old, who can give us wisdom and insight beyond what we can deduce on our own.

We tend to have tunnel vision, often dictated by what we want, more than what is fitting or what we need.



Move!

Part and parcel of God's teaching us to make decisions is our need to move. We need to be able to make decisions when the time comes.

One of my favorite Proverbs says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths" (Prov. 3:5-6). Do you see the movement in the Proverb?

We are expected to "acknowledge God" in what we do and choose. The Hebrew conveys the idea of doing things with a knowledge of who God is and what God is about. This is combined with trusting God. Then we move; we act. We then have the final assurance that God will make our paths straight. This is God's task, and he is up to it. That doesn't mean roads won't be long and hard. It didn't mean that Daniel didn't have to go through the lions' den. But it does mean that God goes with us; that our

walking is not random; and that we are not after-thoughts to God. We are his purposeful creations living purposed lives and trusting him in the outcomes. If we acknowledge him as Lord, which includes seeking his guidance with humble and obedient hearts, then we can trust him to see that our paths are straight, meaning they go where he wants us to go.

Paul used a Greek thought to express this idea in his letter to the Colossians. He wrote, "Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col. 3:17). For the Greeks, all things could be categorized as "words or deeds" so Paul is making the same statement three ways: 1. Whatever you do; 2. In word or deed; 3. Do everything in the name of Jesus. We are to acknowledge the Lord in all our paths. That is the key.



Keep humble

As we move and work for God, fulfilling his purposes in our lives, he will sometimes give us success in those endeavors. It is of great importance that we never let that success go to our heads. It is not our success. It is God's. He gave us the gifts. He gave us the opportunities. The success is his. The glory is his.

Do a word search on the terms "pride/proud" and "humble" in Scripture. It will amaze you how pride is at the root of so much that goes wrong with people walking in God's will and purposes. By the same token, those who humble themselves before him are lifted up over and over to the works God wills to be done. These are the people who give God the glory, rather than soaking it in themselves.

If we acknowledge him as Lord, which includes seeking his guidance with humble and obedient hearts, then we can trust him to see that our paths are straight, meaning they go where he wants us to go.



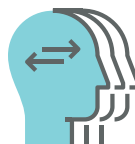
Be grateful

God doesn't need you or me. We need him. God will have his kingdom; he will see his plans to fruition. We get to play a role. That is our honor. It should not be a burden nor an obligation. It is an opportunity born out of love.

I love my sweet wife Becky. Because of our love, when I get a chance to do something special for her, I do not do it out of obligation. I do not say, "Becky, I am going to do this for you, but it is only because it

is my duty as your husband." That is not love! I can quickly tell her out of love, "It is my pleasure to do this."

So it is with God. We do not do out of duty. We do out of pleasure. Jesus told his disciples, "If you love me you will keep my commandments" (Jn. 14:15). We do out of love with grateful hearts for the opportunities.



Serve heartily

As we find our places and purposes before God, as we experience the joy of humbly serving him out of love for him and his kingdom, we can then press the pedal down and go ahead full speed. We should serve him with all that we have and all we can muster. In the strength he gives us, we work diligently.

Jesus said the greatest commandment was to "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Mt. 22:37). This is our charge, our privilege, and our opportunity. How marvelous!

Fast forward three plus decades. Becky and I have reared five delightful children who are now serving God in various ways around the globe! Our gratitude to God is deep.

I still practice law, keeping offices in Houston, New York, and Los Angeles. I have 60 lawyers working in those offices. I get to try high profile cases all over the United States. This is not because of me. It is not because I wanted it, went out, and got it. It is because God's guidance has led me here, and by his grace, I am trying to do what I believe he wants me to do.

I like my job. I am blessed in my job. But the real blessing is found for me each Sunday morning at Champion Forest Baptist Church. I get to teach between 600 and 800 people each week. If I had chosen to be a preacher by profession, the odds are great that I would not be serving at a church that large. Plus, there's the added bonus: no hassles over budget, administrative work, etc. I get to do the teaching; the part I enjoy.

At age 56, I look back and know I would not have been where I am today if I had chosen my route independent of God. God nudged, prompted, guided, and loved me. It was his purpose, his work, and the glory is all his. Find God's purpose. You will never find a greater joy in this life. ✦

Mark Lanier



Mark is the founder of the Lanier Law Firm in Houston, TX, and has earned international recognition as one of the top trial attorneys in the United States with firm offices in Houston, New York and Los Angeles. He also founded the Lanier Theological Library, one of the nation's largest private theological collections.

Mark is the founder of the Christian Trial Lawyers Association, a non-profit organization whose goal is to create a network of principled attorneys to minister to others through civic-minded endeavours. An accomplished author, Mark recently published the book, *Christianity on Trial* (IVP 2014).

Mark is the father of five wonderful children and lives in Houston with his wife, Becky. He also teaches a weekly, 700-plus-member Bible study class focusing on Biblical Literacy.

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The *Purpose* of *Giving*

By Mark Slabaugh

"A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed."
(Proverbs 11:25, NIV)

The purpose of giving could also be called the paradox of giving. The unmistakable reality of living a generous life leads to something *more*.

Giving is good for me. There are distinct and real results to living generously. Read that verse again... "a generous person will prosper". *How can that be if I give something away? How can I gain by subtraction?* God's promises are not limited by our human logic. The reality is that living as someone who "refreshes others" is a reflection of God the Father. "For God so loved the world that He gave..." (John 3:16). Even so, how does reflecting our Heavenly Father bring prospering?

Joy. There is great joy and discovery in living generously - refreshing others. There is an unmistakable connection between joy and giving. Why? Take a moment and think of two or three people that display a spirit of generosity on a regular basis. What is their countenance and attitude? Are they generally joy-filled? Or is there apprehension in their generosity? Are you refreshed when you are in their company? I have found generous people to be the most encouraging and engaging people to converse. There is a contagious spirit about them that makes me want what they have. It is truly rare to encounter someone who is generous and angry. Generosity does something to your soul. And I advocate that giving to the work of Christ through the local church does something for your soul that cannot be duplicated in any other outlet. "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7, NIV). My discovery has been that the "cheerful" part comes with giving - even before I give.

Perspective. Consider Jesus' teaching to "seek first the Kingdom of God" in Matthew 6:33. The most important pursuit(s) in this earthly life is not money or possessions or even my earthly family. The most important pursuit in this earthly life is heavenly perspective (I know, another

paradox). As your pursuit is clarified, perspective is gained. Or rather, perspective continues to be gained... it is a process of discovery; fascinating discovery! Think of it like this: when a child is seven, parents are so smart and bring such great understanding and clarity to the world's questions. Add ten years to the child's life and everyone older than twenty-five is clueless. Add another thirty years to the teen's life and the realization of ignorance hits him in the face with a seventeen year old child of his own. Perspective. Heavenly perspective that informs life's choices and pursuits. Heavenly perspective that reveals the value of refreshing others, loving your neighbor, and living with an open hand rather than a clenched fist.

Honor. Luke 16 gives us a picture of being faithful with our money/possessions. I'm always struck by "You cannot serve both God and money" (Luke 16:13, NIV). This warning does not restrict us from having money. It is a guardrail for us to navigate the pathway of life. Guardrails keep us on the best path. Consider the reaction of the Pharisees, "who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus" (Luke 16:14, NIV). Our attitude toward money is one of the ways in which we bring honor to the Lord. The Bible gives us guardrails as protectors. Staying within the guardrails is not choosing the easy path, it is choosing to live the best life that the Creator has designed for us. The handling



of money and possessions is not exempt from biblical instruction; in fact, the challenge of holding the love of money at bay is throughout scripture. This instruction is given so that we may live life to the fullest.

Living a life of generosity is good for me. Generosity brings joy and joy brings generosity. Heavenly perspective aligns my pursuits to the heart of Christ. Following God's instruction on money, giving, and possession leads to a fuller experience of His plan for our lives.

The ultimate purpose of giving is the same as our earthly lives: to bring honor and praise to God. The Israelites were commissioned to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19:6, NIV); in other words, be the hands and feet of God and reflect His nature and goodness to others. Our resources should empower this lifestyle and calling. ✦

Mark Slabaugh



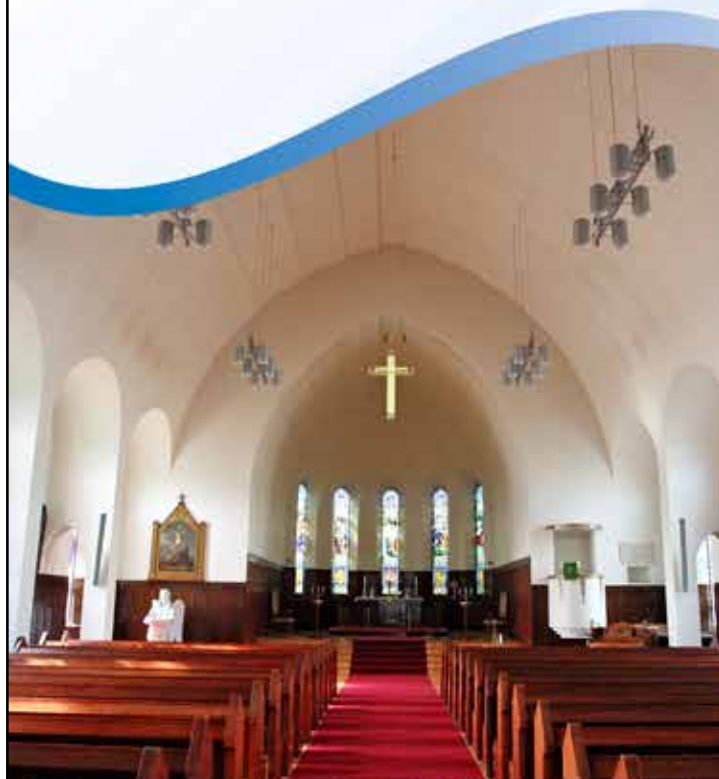
Mark served the local church for over 15 years – seven of those as an Executive Pastor. His passion and servant's heart helps local churches drive toward generosity and stewardship for greater Kingdom impact. He has significant experience with large, innovative churches and those expanding to multisite ministry. You can reach Mark at mark@generis.com.



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How Continuity and Clarity Protect Your Purpose in Seasons of Leadership Transitions

By Will Heath

One cannot underscore the impact organizational continuity and missional clarity have on the succession planning process. These two factors are among the top three to four issues that shape the overall health and effectiveness of a leadership transition.

To help you understand what organizational continuity is, let me offer a description of what it is not. Organizational continuity is not the same as maintaining the status quo. In fact, having a mindset that believes a ministry should maintain the status quo is often the biggest barrier to the establishment of organizational continuity.

The reality is that trusted leaders with a long tenure tend to mask a ministry's need to address issues. This isn't intentional, but over time, the leader becomes the glue that holds everything together. Their relational connection with staff, boards, elders, committees, major donors and members allows them to maneuver broken and confusing systems. Consequently, no one ever takes the time or has the courage to evaluate the reality of the overall health of the ministry. To illustrate this point, I'll offer two categories as examples: Governance and Staffing.



Governance

In reality, there are only two instances where people actually care what their by-laws and policies state. The first is when they are on the losing side of a key decision. The second is when it comes to selecting a new pastor. When these two issues come up, people turn to the governing documents to make sure everything is handled the “right way.” The “right way” is usually spiritual speak for making sure things happen “their way.”

In my experience, very few ministries operate according to their by-laws. This exposes the ministry to considerable amounts of turmoil as there is no clearly stated methodology to evaluate and recommend options. It is in these environments that membership can become quickly divided on how to move forward. It is also in this environment that people stop investing in the ministry because there is no clear pathway forward.

Staffing

A topic that often comes up for larger churches during a pastoral transition has to do with the staff structure. Many of these churches had modest beginnings. The typical organizational structure was a hierarchical approach. As the ministry grew, staff was added and the hierarchy built out. The challenge with a hierarchical system, however, is that it has a tendency to foster a silo mentality and actually begins working against the church’s ability to effectively implement programming.

Business leaders have been aware of best practices related to organizational structure and design for decades. Church leaders, on the other hand, have little exposure to thinking in this area. It is not uncommon for a pastor or ministry leader to intuitively recognize something is off with the way their staff is structured. Without any real way to define and explain the problem, they develop various team strategies in an attempt

The “right way” is usually spiritual speak for making sure things happen “their way.”

to address the issue. Inserting a new leader with their own perspective for how a staff should be organized brings a high level of tension and uncertainty to the rest of the staff.

People in leadership that equate organizational continuity with maintaining the status quo will not give themselves the time to do the work of evaluating these and other key areas of institutional health. Even though there may be a sense that certain areas should be addressed, they prefer to simply stay put and let the new leader deal with it later.

The unfortunate reality is that the successor is often the first person that has a willingness or ability to look beyond the status quo to point out underlying deficiencies that must be addressed. It is in these moments, when the former leader is no longer in place to keep everything glued together, that cracks in the foundation become exposed. These moments are often difficult to navigate for both the membership and successor. In many cases the new guy is the one held accountable for problems that existed long before he showed up.

Like organizational continuity, missional clarity is another key factor in the healthy implementation of a leadership transition strategy. Ministries, and the contexts in which they serve, change over time. Communities change. What was once the new development that brought young families and their children to the facility's front door is now home to empty nesters. The neighborhood that was once Caucasian is now predominately minority. Church ministry facilities built in a rural context are now in the middle of the urban sprawl. Ministries located in vibrant areas now watch as the neighboring buildings put vacancy signs in the front window. Conversely, ministries that committed to stay in downtown settings are seeing a resurgence as more and more people flock to city centers. As communities change over time, so do the people that make up those congregations.

Ministries with long-tenured leadership are wise to invest in a process that helps them recapture their sense of what makes their church unique. At Auxano, we see churches and ministries experiencing clarity when they are able to answer these five simple yet profound questions.

What are we doing?

Why are we doing it?

How are we doing it?

When are we successful?

Where is God taking us?

The process of discovering the answers to these questions brings incredible hope and courage to move forward.

Consider if you will, the implications of settling into the status quo and not capturing a sense of identity as you move towards a season of leadership transition. I'm sure your imaginings won't take you too far before you recall the story of a transition gone horribly wrong. Chances are, you can point to a lack of continuity and identity as a key source of trouble.

Some of you will have the good fortune of reflecting on a story of a transition that went incredibly well. As you recount that story in your mind, are you able to recognize the stability and conviction with which the ministry operated in their season of transition? Those are the by-products of leadership having the courage to push beyond the status quo and committing to the work of clarity. ✚

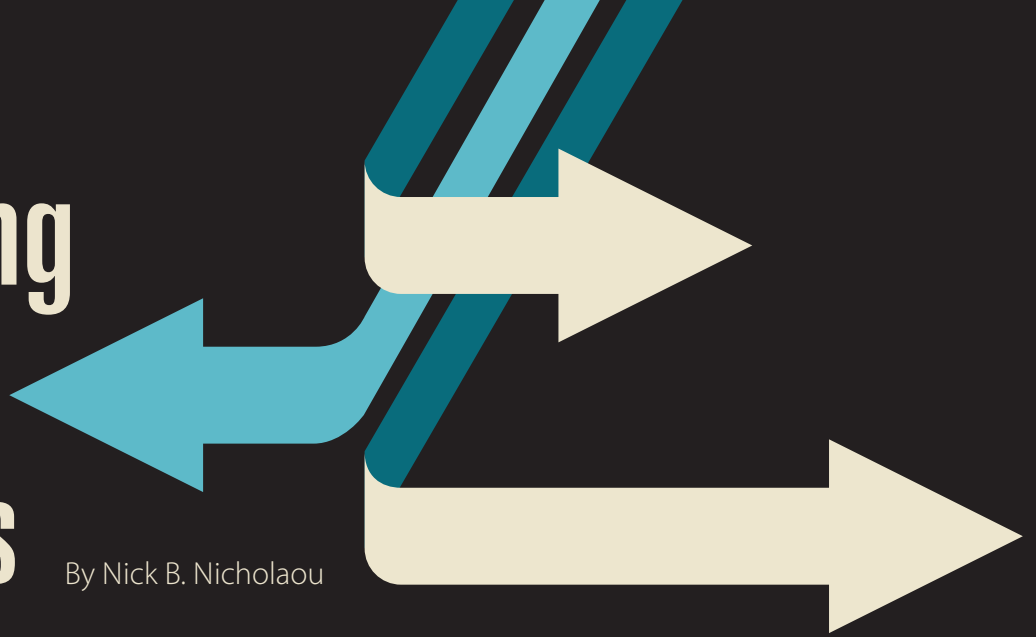
Will Heath



Will Heath is a unique voice on the topic of transition management and succession planning. His ministry and professional experiences have afforded him rare front-row access to succession plans at various stages of development and implementation in churches, parachurch ministries, nonprofits and businesses. If you would like more information on how your ministry can prepare for a season of leadership transition, you can reach Will at willheath@auxano.com.

On Making Difficult Decisions

By Nick B. Nicholaou



Sometimes we're faced with having to make a difficult decision, where every option has a significant downside. How should we process those? And how do we handle the aftermath?

Recently we had to euthanize our wonderful dog, Java. He was sixteen and in his last year he lost his sight, began having difficulty walking, and was in pain. What does that have to do with IT? As I've dealt with the results of the decision and the finality of it, it made me think about decision making processes.

Conundrums Abound!

In all of life— including managing technology at church or for a ministry— we find ourselves having to make difficult choices. There isn't always an obvious good option, yet we have to choose one.

Invariably there are people around us who would like the decision to go in the direction for which they're lobbying. Sometimes those are vendors, sometimes fellow team members, sometimes employees, and sometimes family or friends. We all want to be liked and we all want to do the right thing. Those situations are very challenging because we really want to get them right!

Sometimes there is no turning back once the decision has been made! That makes these situations all the harder. Merriam-Webster defines a conundrum as an intricate and difficult problem. When there seems to be no positive outcome and the decision is irrevocable, the problem looms even larger.

Settle on a Methodology

It is important to settle on a methodology so that, when faced with intricate and difficult problems, you have a higher likelihood of getting it right. Some help that I've gotten over time includes the following:

- Get to know the scriptures— beginning to end. There is great wisdom there, and Psalm 119:24 says, "Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors." (NIV) A good decision will never violate what the Lord has said in his word.
- Talk with those you respect and give them an opportunity to weigh in. In Proverbs 15:22 King Solomon said, "Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed." (NIV) Don't make difficult decisions alone. Let others ask questions and help enhance the outcome.
- Speaking of talking with many counselors, it cannot be understated that prayer is essential. God wants to help us make wise decisions! Solomon said in Proverbs 2:6, "For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding." (NIV) So talk with God about the decision! Ask him to lead and guide you in unmistakable ways! And he will do so!
- As time allows, talk about the options and the decision you're feeling led to make with those who will be impacted to get a read on how they feel about it. Let them process through it just like you did, considering the pros and cons of the options. King Solomon also said, in Proverbs 29:1, "Whoever remains stiff-necked after many rebukes will suddenly be destroyed— without remedy." (NIV) In our context, if you find that everyone believes it is a bad decision, this will give you time to re-think your position or get better grounded in your reason for making it. It is often said that to lead effectively, you need followers; if no one is following you because they don't like your decisions, it could destroy relationships that are important to you.

Many decisions, once made, cannot be undone.

- Throughout the process, be humble and gentle. Jesus' half-brother said in James 4:6,10, "But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: 'God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble...'. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."

No Turning Back!

These decisions could include terminating an employment relationship or buying certain hardware or software solutions. In all these, make certain you can live with the results, even though you may not know exactly what the results will be!

In deciding to relieve our dog of his pain, I believe I made the right decision. My wife agrees, thankfully, but there is the question of timing. The longer we put it off, the more pain he suffered. Putting it off would have been for our convenience; because we didn't want to make the decision. Once it was made, though, there was no way to undo it. And because we loved him, it has been heartbreaking to live with.

That is the way it is with so many decisions we make though! We can't simply unwind them or turn back the clock. So it is important to have a solid sense that the decision is as correct as possible and not rushed. ✚

Nick B. Nicholaou



Nick Nicholaou is president of MBS, an IT consulting firm specializing in church and ministry computer networks, VoIP, and private cloud hosted services. You can reach Nick at nick@mbsinc.com, and may want to check out his firm's website (www.mbsinc.com) and his blog at <http://ministry-it.blogspot.com>.

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by Kim Whaley

The Purpose of Benefits

I think we all wake up some days and wonder why we do what we do (or is that just me...?). I am blessed to say for the most part that I truly love my job. I overhear so many people in casual conversation talk about how much they hate what they do for a living and I wonder, "Why are you still there?" This gets me to thinking about why I love my job, even though I face the same day to day struggles and frustrations as everyone else. The answer is always, "God called me to do this and this is my purpose."

So what exactly do I do? I provide employee benefits for small to medium -size churches and businesses. When I say small; I work with churches with as few as two full-time employees. My largest employer has 187 full-time employees who need benefits. I've been in the insurance industry since 1991 and have made the rounds from life insurance to disability insurance to estate planning and in 2001 I became an Employee Benefits Specialist. What makes my purpose or calling so special to me? It is the fact that in 1990 we learned that my then 31-year-old husband was facing a major health crisis. Because he was unable to work, he lost his job and therefore lost his health insurance. At the time, I was a stay at home mom to our five-year-old daughter and it was very difficult to find a job after being out of the workforce for nearly six years. When I did find employment, it did not offer benefits. The medical bills kept mounting and about six months into this nightmare we discovered our daughter needed surgery! You cannot imagine the fear we faced with increasing debt from medical bills and little or no income. The light at the end of the tunnel truly did appear to be a train.

Fast forward ten years later. We were finally able to pay off the last of the medical bills but for ten years there was no entertainment in our life; no vacations, no dining out, no movies. Every penny went towards the hospital bills which were the result of one year of unemployment and no health insurance. Talk about freedom! God blessed us in even the darkest days of 1990 by providing a roof over our heads and food for our table but there were no extras. The most humbling experience we have gone through in our 34 years of marriage was coming home one afternoon and finding bags of groceries on our front porch. Our church family at the time in Jacksonville, Florida had figured out we were reaching a breaking point financially and provided a month's worth of food and necessities. Oh, the luxury! Cereal! Toothpaste! Toilet Paper! Cleaning Supplies! They thought of everything.

So what is my purpose? I want to make sure that everyone I meet who tells me "I'm going to take a chance and not purchase health insurance" understands exactly what they are risking. I want to understand this strange new world of health insurance under Obamacare so that the employers I work with are fully aware of their responsibilities and also the consequences for noncompliance. And I want to make sure that anyone who chooses to work with me through Core Benefits knows that we are in their corner in the event of medical claims or questions about how to make their benefits work for them. At the end of the day, that is enough for me. ✚

Kim Whaley



Kim Whaley has been in the industry since 1991 and with Core for over 9 years. In her role as a Benefits Specialist with Core and as a Registered Health Underwriter, Kim has focused on understanding ACA regulations and advising small group employers with as few as two employees in the areas of health, dental, life and disability insurance as well as directing employers in areas such as Section 125 Plans,

legislative updates, payroll deduction plans and other supplemental group benefits. You can reach Kim at kim@corebenefits.net.



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cleansweep

by Charles Wood

Cleaning Up Your First Impression

The first impression a guest in your facility receives will have a major impact on their decision to return again. Returning guests have more chances to hear the gospel and grow in their faith. With that in mind, there should be an emphasis on making sure guests receive a positive impression of their experience visiting your facility. Cleanliness is one of the first things people perceive when visiting somewhere new. Clean floors, restrooms and well-kept facilities provide a positive impression and experience for your guests and members alike. Having a standardized cleaning program that covers training on proper cleaning procedures, products and safety information will help to ensure that your facilities remain clean, healthy and welcoming.

When implementing a cleaning program for your facility, you create a standard for the way things are expected to be done and how often tasks should be performed. Having standards in place provides a way to effectively measure how well the facility is being maintained and how often things should be done. This will ensure that nothing gets overlooked or missed. Following a good daily cleaning schedule will also prolong the amount of time before restorative cleaning or maintenance is required. Implementing a cleaning program that sets standards for cleaning procedures and a schedule for how often tasks are performed is the first step towards maintaining a clean, welcoming facility.

Having the correct products in place is another key factor to consider when implementing a standardized cleaning program for your facility. When determining the proper cleaning chemicals for use in your facility, focus on finding

products that are safe for the user, effective for their intended purpose, and affordable within your budget. You must also determine the best types of cleaning products based on the needs of your facility. There are many different types of cleaning chemicals from alkaline degreasers to pH neutral floor cleaners to acid restroom cleaners. Having the correct products for your facility will be a major factor in how effective your cleaning program will be. Each chemistry is more effective at performing a specific task and having the correct tool for the job will achieve better results. Consult with your sales rep to help evaluate the needs of your facility and determine the best products to meet those specific needs.

Safety training is another concern that should be satisfied by implementing a standardized cleaning program in your facility. It is important to ensure that the products you choose for use in your facility are safe, and that those using them are aware of how to use them properly. This will minimize the risk of accidents and/or someone getting injured while maintaining the facility. Make sure that whoever is cleaning the facility, or using your cleaning products has been trained on the proper use of the product and the product's intended purpose. It is also required that you supply several pieces of safety information for each product used in the facility including SDS sheets, and properly labeled spray bottles or containers for each product. These items should be provided by the manufacturer of the products and should be readily accessible at your facility. You may refer to the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard for more information on safety requirements in your facility.

It is important to ensure that the products you choose for use in your facility are safe, and that those using them are aware of how to use them properly.

The cleanliness of your facility is one of the first things people perceive when generating their first impression. Having a standardized cleaning program for your facility will help to ensure that your facilities remain clean, healthy and welcoming. This program should set standards for proper cleaning procedures, products, and safety. With one of the most extensive lines on the market, Buckeye offers superior, cost-effective products that promote safety for the environment and the worker. Buckeye also leads the way in providing the best training programs for end-users in the industry. The Honors Custodial Training Program is Buckeye's specialized training program for churches, schools, and universities. The Honors website, www.buckeyehonors.com, features the complete program and includes training videos and tests, manuals, PowerPoint presentations, Safety Data Sheets (SDS), product literature, and wall charts. Standardizing cleaning in your facility will reduce labor and product costs, provide optimal training, simplify ordering, and achieve the best results. Speak with a representative to schedule a free facility evaluation and we can help establish a standardized cleaning program based on your individual needs. +

Charles Wood



Charles is a manufacturer sales representative for Buckeye International. He has been responsible for the Houston area since 2009. Charles, a founding member of the Lighthouse Independent Fundamental Baptist Church in Willis, Texas, serves as the Church Treasurer. You can reach Charles at cwood@buckeyeinternational.com.



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we've got you covered

by Gary Benson

I went fishing with my grandson recently and we caught a few small perch and laid them carefully on the grass. As they lay on the ground, they barely moved where just minutes before, we could see them swimming in the small pond with vigor; darting this way and that. My granddaughter, ever the "animal lover," tried to talk to them and tried to help them adapt to their new surroundings. But despite everything she tried, nothing changed. Finally, she pleaded with me to put them back in the water – they were just not doing well in their new world.

Like a fish out of water, I've found myself with that same feeling as I've tried to adapt to the challenges of a new world known as Cyber Liability. But unlike our little fish friends, we must adapt to new changes and to a new world. We must also consider the risks associated with those changes. For years, the bottom line pledge of our agency has been to help *Protect Your Ministry* and so with that continued purpose in mind, please allow us to share just a few tidbits of information on a new area of risk that you need to be keenly aware of – Cyber Liability.

Computers are obviously part of our world. If they are down, well it's just time to go home! But beyond their obvious usefulness, we have to be aware of how much damage can be done if the security of your ministry's computer is compromised. While we've seen major retailers impacted already in this area with significant financial ramifications, we must also realize that small businesses (including churches and non-profits) are also valid targets. That may at first seem farfetched, but just this year we've seen numerous first-hand attempted cybercrimes and breaches on accounts you'd deem to have solid firewalls and other protections in place. With all of that said, please allow us to touch the surface on this by sharing...

5 Reasons Your Organization Should Consider A Cyber Liability Policy

1. Social Media – As social media (Facebook, etc.) plays an increased role in connecting churches and nonprofits to their members and guests, new avenues are created for libel, slander, defamation and other forms of disparagement. Growing concerns even among websites and blogs include the unauthorized use of photos, copyright infringement, and prayer lists.

2. Breaches - Computer breaches can be expensive. Breach notification laws and required forensic analysis can cost an organization thousands (average cost per record about \$150). Breaches can be brought about by the work of hackers or simply the loss of sensitive information via stolen or lost laptops, tablets, or smartphones. Data that churches tend to carry that are of interest to hackers may include:

- a. Highly sensitive financial giving records
- b. Bank account information
- c. Credit card data
- d. Background check information
- e. Employee benefits information
- f. Social Security numbers of employees/volunteers
- g. Medical information or history of any church member that is often obtained for mission trips or youth activities and comprised via a data breach or the theft or loss of a laptop
- h. Student record information

3. Cyber Extortion – Extortion is defined as an attack or threat of attack coupled with a demand for money to avert or stop the attack. It can take many forms but in recent years, cybercriminals have developed ransomware which encrypts an organization's data. The extortionist's victim typically receives an email that offer the private decryption key in exchange for a monetary payment.

4. Cybercrime Is Growing Rapidly – Experts are beginning to warn that smaller organizations, including churches and similar groups, increasingly fall victim to cybercrimes and other online challenges.

5. Coverage Gap – Cyber Liability events are generally not covered under most general liability policies.

Perhaps you remember an old sci-fi movie from the 70's called *Strange New World*. Maybe that's where we're at but one thing seems clear - we definitely have to look at things differently than we did even just last year. In doing so, you'll best protect your ministry and its purpose. Ultimately that's our challenge. ✦

Gary Benson



Gary Benson is a 25-year insurance professional. He owns and operates the Insurance One Agency in The Woodlands, Texas. You can reach Gary at garyb@insuranceoneagency.com.



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Meet Our New CO+OP Team Member

John Hagarty



Whenever a new position is created, we like to get to know a little about that person; where they came from, and what made them pick our organization. Our most recent hire, John Hagarty, filled the new position of Marketing Manager at the CO+OP. Below is the interview by a fellow team member, Sue Washburn. Learn more about John and how he ended up in this position.

Sue: When did you join the CO+OP team?

John: I joined in September of this year.

Sue: What brought you to the CO+OP?

John: I was at a church young adult gathering. While watching the Olympics, a conversation came up about the challenges of work schedules. I was already enrolled in seminary and was looking for a job that could also work alongside my school schedule.

Taylor Malott, who happens to be the Systems and Process Manager at the CO+OP, inquired about what type of work I was looking for. When I mentioned that I had past experience in marketing, he told me that the CO+OP was looking for someone to fill a new marketing position. That night I submitted my resume and the rest is history.

Sue: That is interesting how God strategically connected the two of you right when both needs would be met. How did you and Taylor meet?

John: I moved here in January of this year and started attending the same church as Taylor.

Sue: Where did you move from?

John: I am originally from Phoenix, Arizona. I felt led to move to the Houston area to attend seminary. I have enjoyed the cooler temperatures—yes, even the humidity!

Sue: OK. I am not sure I really understand anything “cool” about Houston’s weather so I will move on to something else I am curious about. What does seminary and marketing have to do with each other?

John: It is funny you ask that question. My heart is ultimately to glorify God and make Him known to others. So it is interesting that God again, strategically, led me to the CO+OP which helps ministries save money so they can glorify God and make Him known.

Sue: How else do you find the CO+OP matches up to your purpose?

John: As we are commissioned to connect people with the Ultimate Resource that saves, we too, at the CO+OP are all about connecting people to resources that save.

Sue: I love that concept. We save ministry dollars on products, services and education for our members. Can you speak a little about your new role at the CO+OP?

John: My role is to help grow CO+OP membership and increase vendor usage. I will do this by providing leadership, training and oversight to our Connection Partners. My job should be easy because we have a seasoned crew already in place (You can find their contact info on page 5). Together, we will thrive! I look forward to building relationships with the CO+OP members and vendors and getting to know them better.

Sue: If you could communicate one thing to the members, what would it be?

John: That very thing—communication is the key in any relationship. The CO+OP just recently developed and implemented a tool called the Vendor Satisfaction Survey. I encourage every CO+OP church, school and ministry who utilizes our vendor services, or interacts with them in any capacity, to complete the survey.

Sue: That’s right. We have already received several surveys back that have helped us improve member-vendor relationships. Where do they find the survey?

John: They can find the survey at www.churchco-op.org. Or, they can call the CO+OP office at 832-478-5131 to have the survey sent to them.

Sue: Do you have any last words for our readers?

John: It will be great seeing you all at the upcoming Texas Ministry Conference on February 16, 2017 (#tmc2017thrive). Bring your co-workers and friends and let’s connect. In the meantime, feel free to contact me at any time. You can reach me at john@churchco-op.org or 832-478-5131.

Three words to describe me would be...

Serious, Funny, Athletic.

I do my best thinking when ...

I am in my car.

I always smile when...

I hear the right gospel being preached.

My dream vacation would be...

Somewhere tropical.

The last book I read was...

Biblical Apologetics: Defending the Gospel of Christ.

You ought to see my collection of...

Books.

When I am cruising in my car I am...

Listening to music.

If you ask me there could never be enough...

Prayer.

You will never catch me eating...

Oysters.

In my spare time, you will find me...

At the gym.

My all time favorite movie is... That's debatable.

When it comes to TV shows, I try not to miss...

Blue Bloods (but on Netflix).

The one thing I will not leave home without is... My cell phone.

The best thing about my job is...

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- **Equip** – We want to introduce you to resources that can help you be more effective in your position. Our many business partners and connections understand the needs of the local church and can help you maintain high standards while being cost effective.

The Houston Metro Chapter meets the 3rd Thursday of each month in various churches in the Houston area.

The Houston Metro Chapter meetings this year include such well known speakers and teachers as non-profit attorney and CPA Frank and Elaine Sommerville, National IT Specialist Nick Nicholaou, The Texas Workforce Commission, The Church CO+OP's Executive Director (and veteran church business administrator) Patti Malott, and Ministry Leadership coach Gary Crowell.

- You can learn more about the Houston Metro chapter, register for a monthly meeting, or join the chapter at www.nacbahouston.com.
- This year's team of officers represent the diverse makeup of the chapter as a whole.

President - Eddie Foster, Executive Pastor of Family Life Assembly of God, is currently serving as President for the Houston Metro Chapter of The Church Network and previously served as Treasurer and V.P. of Programming. Eddie is a member of the national The Church Network and has been a member of the local chapter of NACBA since 2010.

Vice President of Programming - Crystal Oliver, Director of Finance & Benefits at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, is currently serving as V.P. of Programming and has previously served as Treasurer for the Houston Metro Chapter of The Church Network.

Vice President of Membership - Bill Campbell, CCA is Church Administrator at Northeast Houston Baptist Church and is currently serving as V.P. of Membership for the Houston Metro Chapter of The Church Network.

Secretary - Peggy Zorola Miller, Managing Accountant and Statistician for the Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, is presently serving as Secretary of the Houston Metro Chapter of The Church Network.

Treasurer - Kelley Trimble is Executive Administrator at South Main Baptist Church of Pasadena. She serves as Treasurer for the Houston Metro Chapter of The Church Network and has previously served as Secretary and V.P. of Membership.

Past President - Harry Fritzenschaft, CCA is Pastor of Business Administration for the Vineyard Church of Houston and is currently serving as the immediate Past President of the Houston Metro Chapter of The Church Network. Harry previously served as Treasurer, Vice President of Membership, Vice President of Programming, and President.

The Houston Metro Chapter is one of dozens of chapters throughout the country. The Chapter is regularly recognized by the national organization as one of the top chapters in the nation. You can learn more about the Houston Chapter at nacbahouston.org.

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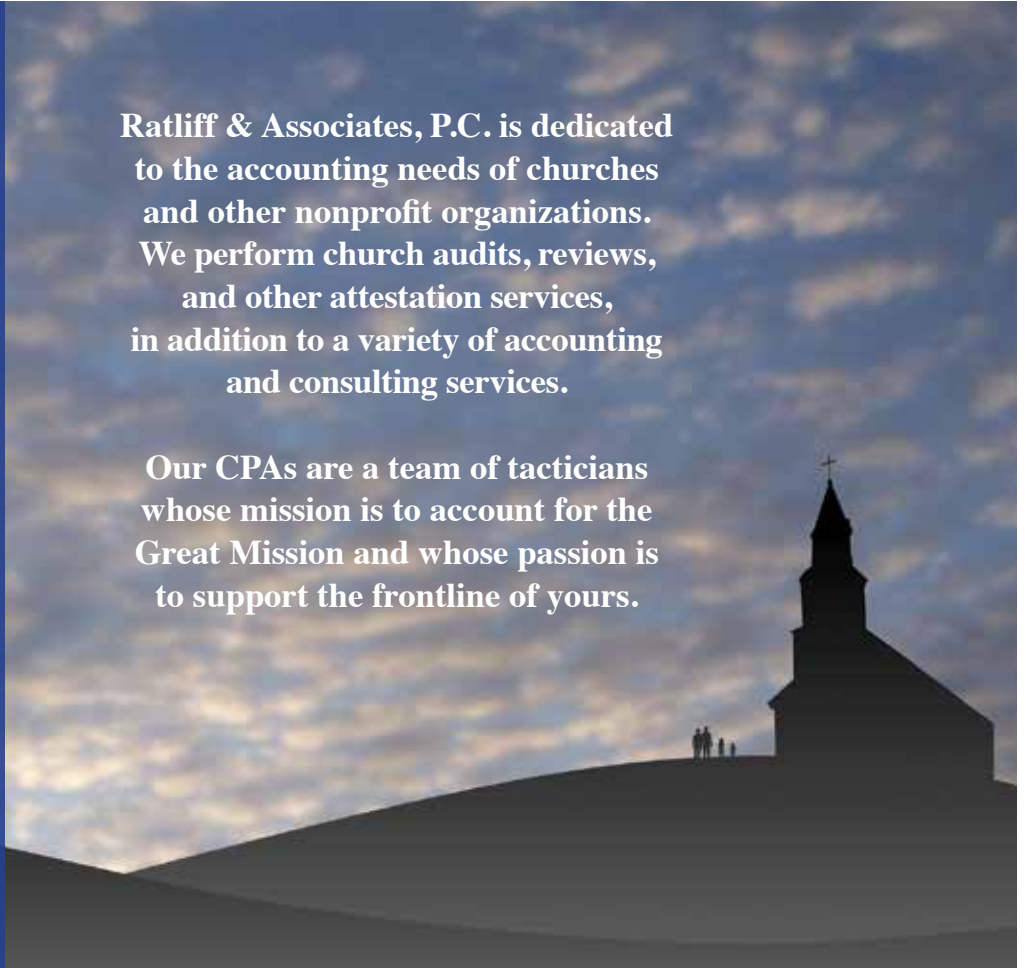
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