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Time with God

by Byron Paulus

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CONTENTS



It's About Time... to Discuss Cyber Bullying

The root cause of cyber bullying is bullying and we need to understand the difference between fighting and bullying.



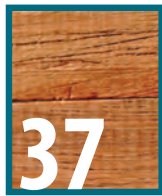
The Biggest Loser

We are all the "Biggest Losers" when we allow distractions, lack of focus, poorly written job descriptions, and yes, even laziness, get us away from the things we do best.



Time for Building Teams

Many ministries make the mistake of saying they want teamwork, but then only reward individual success.



It's Time to Get Your House in Order

A weak business foundation can be as devastating to a church as a weak or cracked spiritual foundation.

AUGUST/ SEPTEMBER 2011

FEATURE ARTICLE

Time With God Page 19

It's noteworthy that a book most Americans take for granted—and rarely read—was worthy of death in a far corner of the world.

Departments

Clean Sweep Page 6

Challenged with an ever-changing and unpredictable economy, it is time for a clean "S.W.E.E.P."

Sound Bytes Page 10

If you've ever sent a mass email, you know that the results can be pretty underwhelming.

Bank Notes Page 34

The most important thing to remember is that the driving factors in your church should be reflected in your budget.

More Power to You Page 40

Okay, all you gadget people...watch out for what is coming into your home.

Know Your Vendors Pages 42 & 43

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Mustang Lighting & Supply – A wide range of exciting lighting solutions, from modern to traditional, for your home or business.

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From the Director

It's About Time...

What is interesting about time is how quickly it passes when we are busy and focused. Another twist on this reality is how much more quickly it seems to pass as we age. Who among us cannot recall the long wait for Christmas when we were 8 years old? How many have blinked and realized that the child whose diapers we were changing just yesterday is now wearing a cap and gown in a graduation line?

Time is the one resource we all share in equal amounts...until it finally runs out. Ecclesiastes 3 really unpacks this concept. Treat yourself to reading the first two chapters of the book before you read Chapter 3. See if you can find it in the Contemporary English Version. Said to have been written by the wisest person, the book really puts time into perspective. Verse 11(a) tells us that "God makes everything happen at the right time." Verse 14 tells us that "God has done all this so that we will worship him." Solomon focuses on what is really important. Can I do that?

Time helps us measure our events and our longevity. Time inspires confidence and underscores maturity. We honor relationships that are tested by time. The unrelenting pace of the hourglass reminds us that our lack of patience is yet another perspective on time.

Over 23 years, our CO+OP has provided the time-honored resource of really good stewardship. Today we have two excellent new vendors to share with you. Both are located in the DFW marketplace. **Mustang**



Lighting, in Garland, serves north Texas (and beyond) with outstanding values in electric parts and services. Need a hi-lift to get to your lamps? They do that. See their ad on page 12.

Denitech, in Coppell, is an outstanding source for Xerox, Sharp and Riso office printers and copiers. In business for many years, they are committed to service and delivery on time. Find the ad for

Denitech inside the front cover of this issue. We're proud and honored to have these two businesses commit to serve the ministries that make up the CO+OP. Let us introduce you to them.

Because our directors carefully vet the vendors, you are able to spend your time on other essential work. Saving time is one of your CO+OP benefits.

One last thought from Ecclesiastes. Chapter 9. One day at a time.

Dan Bishop
Executive Director

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NACBA

2011 Meetings

Alamo Chapter – San Antonio

Meeting on the second Thursday of each month at 11:30 a.m.
Contact: Dave Thomas, 210-828-6425
davidt@stlukes-sa.net
www.nacbaalamo.org

Capital Chapter – Austin

Meeting at Hyde Park Baptist, Speedway @ Austin, 4th floor
Second Thursday of each month at 12 Noon
Contact: Mollie DeVries, 512-255-3322
mdevries@palmvalleylutheranchurch.org

Dallas Chapter

Meeting on the third Thursday of each month in the Dallas
Metroplex at 11:30 a.m.
Contact: Mike Seibold 972-542-7170 ext 231
mseibold@stgabriel.org
www.nacbadallas.org

Fort Worth Chapter

Meeting on the third Thursday of each month, time varies.
Contact: Leonard Harris, 817-332-3191
lharris@st-andrew.com
www.gfwnacba.org

Houston Metro Chapter

Meeting on the third Thursday of each month at 11:15 a.m.
Contact: Nancy Smith, 713-526-1188
nancys@cepc.org
www.nacbahouston.org

North Houston Metro Chapter

Contact: Margie Serio, 936-521-1673
margie.serio@wcbc.us

Heart of Texas (HOT) NACBA Chapter - Waco - Temple - Killeen Area

Meeting on the second Tuesday of each month at 11:30 a.m.
Contact: Rick Cadden, CCA
hotchapter@gmail.com

For more information on a Chapter meeting in your area,
visit the NACBA website, www.nacba.net

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From the Editor

It's All About Time...

Time is the one gift that is equally given to everyone. Whether we live on the East Coast, the West Coast, or in another country, we each are given twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Not a minute more, not a minute less. We choose how we spend it.

On the wall in my home hangs a cross-stitched piece that sums up the subject of time. I would like to share it with you.

This is the beginning of a new day.

God has given me this day to use as I will.

I can waste it or use it for good.

What I do today is important,

because I'm exchanging a day of my life for it.

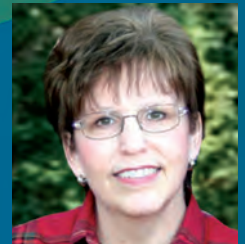
When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever,

leaving in its place something I have traded for it.

I want it to be gain, not loss; good, not evil;
success, not failure;

in order that I shall not regret the price I paid for it.

Each day brings decisions on how we will spend our time. I hope you will take the time to read our excellent articles in this issue—all centered around the subject of time. Whether it is spending time with God, building high performance teams, educating your staff, or growing personally in time management, this issue has something for everyone in your organization. Feel free to make copies and pass them out to those you think would benefit. You can also download the entire issue from our website www.churchco-op.org/magazine.



In addition, don't miss out on our departmental articles—*Clean Sweep*, *Sound Bytes*, *Bank Notes*, *More Power To You*, and *Know Your Vendor*—all packed with relevant information.

Enjoy your reading and thank you for taking the time to learn and grow.

Patti Malott
Managing Editor



cleansweep

Time for a Clean Sweep

by Trey Vick, Joe Precup, Susan Precup

*Challenged with an ever-changing and unpredictable economy, it is time for a clean “S.W.E.E.P.” in the corners and edges of dusty “business as usual.” It is time to replace “outmoded and unnecessary” with **Servant** behaviors, **Weighing** each aspect, **Examining** each person, **Exploring** new opportunities and **Partnering** with the right people.*

Servant behaviors flow both ways in dynamic relationships. Historically, the customer-vendor bond has been more like a master-servant relationship. No one wins in this type of association. As an employee serves the employer, so should the employer serve the employee. People exhibiting pride, integrity, and the desire for long-term relationships crave work that is rewarding, fun, and full of value. The operation of a facility is just as much a ministry as any other aspect of a church. Often, servant behavior is overlooked as people rush to their next event.

Weighing each aspect of your business or ministry on a “zero base” allows for new insights. Doing business differently does not always mean the lowest price; however, in many situations thousands have been saved. You can find value-added service in the right vendors. Vendors are an untapped resource. It is time to perform a weekly or at least a monthly walk through of your facility. There is no better way to understand who is doing what and if they are doing it well than walking through your facility weekly and observing the people, the facility, and the environment.

Examining each person to ensure employees meet basic industry standards opens the avenue to balanced staffing. Longevity does not always equal great work and in many cases, it equals low productivity and complacency. Analyzing the job function required against the performance of an employee usually reveals untapped time and talent. Do not let another year go by of doing the same thing year in and year out. When you have accountability, you have excellence.

Exploring new opportunities in industry or ministry informs you of what other churches, schools, or facilities are doing. When is the last time you went to a conference, seminar, or just visited a comparable institution? Listening to new ideas and sharing information leads to innovations in your own scope of influence.

Partnering with the right people or companies is extremely important. All companies and people are not created equal; they are not all the same. Cross connections to churches and schools of similar size can be very informative. The right vendor can connect different organizations and different faiths, and open doors that create mentoring, advising, cooperating and sharing of information. Open communication with your vendors or other facilities to discuss challenges, obstacles, or successes is just a phone call away.

A Clean "S.W.E.E.P." mid-year positions you for a fun, frantic fall. You have more time during the summer to truly take time for evaluation and development. Discover servant relationships and find the right people to partner. Create ways for employees to shine by giving them achievable expectations. Take time to examine your facility. "Inspect what you Expect." Go learn something new. Remember to begin or renew your cross connections and resolve to be the partner God intended. ✦

Trey Vick, Joe Precup, Susan Precup

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Joe Precup serves as the Operations Director at DTK, Inc. beginning in 1999. Working from the facilities office at Second Baptist Church since 1988, Joe manages the janitorial, bible study/school setups, and event coordination.

A 2007 graduate of the leadership program at College of Biblical Studies, Susan Precup incorporates 27 years of customer service for her clients. DTK lives the slogan "Partnership through Cross Connections." They can be reached at 713 463-7878 or <http://www.dtkinc.com/>.

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soundbytes

by Timothy M. Kachuriak

It's About Time to Fix Your Broken Emails

If you've ever sent a mass email, you know that the results can be pretty underwhelming. Well, you are not alone.

According to the 2011 Convio Non-profit Online Marketing Benchmark Study, the average non-profit email receives only a 19% open rate and a mere 3.06% clickthrough rate. That means that only three out of 100 people who receive your email will actually click on the links to learn more about your event, offer, or to make a donation. Response rates for fundraising emails are even more dismal. According to the Convio report, the average response rate for a fundraising email is a piddly 0.15%. With stats like that, you may wonder why any organization would even bother.

But what if I told you that there is a secret to making email marketing work? What if there was a way to increase clickthrough rates by 1,000% or more by making simple changes to your email message? Would that cause you to reconsider before you trash your email program?

What is the Goal of an Email?

When I speak at conferences, I love to ask this question. I usually get a lot of different answers depending on the group. The right answer is, "a click." The goal of any mass email should be to provide just enough information to the recipient to engage them enough to click through to your website. The reason is simply

because that is the only action a recipient can take. They can't register for an event directly through an email. They can't donate through an email. The only thing the reader can do is click or delete.

Here's an example of how powerful this can be. We conducted a simple A/B split test for one of our clients where we changed one sentence—the last sentence—of an email and sent it to two equal segments. The goal of this particular email campaign was to acquire new donors for the organization. The version of the email that we changed did not use "donate now" language, but instead focused on encouraging the reader to click through to the landing page.

The results were staggering. The test version received a 139% greater clickthrough rate, which translated directly into a 42% increase in revenue from donations. By taking the email's focus off of the ultimate goal (a donation) and making it compelling for the reader to read more (by clicking), we were able to get more people to visit our landing page and make a donation. Psychologists call this "commitment building." By getting people to make a small commitment (clicking), we move them closer to making a larger commitment (donating).

Where Are You Sending All Those Clicks?

Now that we are getting a lot more people clicking links in our emails, we need to think through where we want these people to go. One of the biggest mistakes that most organizations make is that they dump people onto a homepage, generic signup page, or donation page and then leave the user to figure out what to do next. What we need to keep in mind is, whenever anyone goes to a web page, they are asking themselves the following three questions:

"Where am I?"

"What can I do here?"

"Why should I do it?"

If we can clearly answer these three questions on our email landing pages, then we will see our response rates skyrocket.

The first step is to create a specific landing page for each email. This landing page should include copy that continues right where the email left off. Remember, we got people to click through because we engaged them in our story or offered just enough to get them interested—now we need to provide them with what Paul Harvey would call "the rest of the story."

For donation landing pages, focus on communicating the impact that will be generated through the reader's financial gift. For event landing pages, highlight the top seven reasons why the reader should register right now. The key is to continuously communicate with the reader the value or benefit of the action you want them to take. Once they have taken the first step of clicking through to your web site, they are that much closer to making a decision.

The next thing you want to do with your landing page is to try to make it as easy as possible for people to complete the action you are asking them to make. Having ridiculously long forms for people to fill out or including multiple "bail out" links can drastically affect response rates. This is especially true for donation landing pages. For some reason, we think that the psychology of giving a gift online is equivalent to ordering a product online. This couldn't be further from the truth.

When you order a product online, you may be willing to jump through a series of virtual hoops, because at the end of the day, you are going to get your book from Amazon. When ordering products online, the benefit comes at the end of the process. Not true with giving a donation online. You've been blessed. You've been inspired. When donating online, the benefit comes first. The act of filling out the form and submitting payment needs to be simple and pain-free. It needs to reinforce the positive feeling that inspired the gift.

Good Stewardship = Better Emails

When we think of stewardship, for some reason we focus in on its application to finances. But stewardship is about more than just money. God has entrusted all of us with tremendous gifts and resources. These resources are to be carefully managed and put to good use. Email Marketing is a gift; a powerful tool that can enable us to communicate and engage people quickly and efficiently. By applying some of these techniques, you will be able to make better use of email marketing—and that, my friends, is good stewardship! ✦

Timothy M. Kachuriak



Tim Kachuriak is Senior Vice President of Digital Marketing at KMA, a Pursuant Company. His job is to help his clients develop new solutions to their fundraising and marketing challenges, and make their existing solutions work better. Tim is an avid public speaker, blogger, entrepreneur, certified landing page and email optimizer, husband, and father of three beautiful children. You can follow him at @DigitalDonor.

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2 COLOR IMPRINT	\$6.49	\$5.69	\$5.39	\$4.19
3 COLOR IMPRINT	\$7.39	\$6.19	\$5.79	\$4.54
4 COLOR IMPRINT	\$8.29	\$6.69	\$6.19	\$4.89

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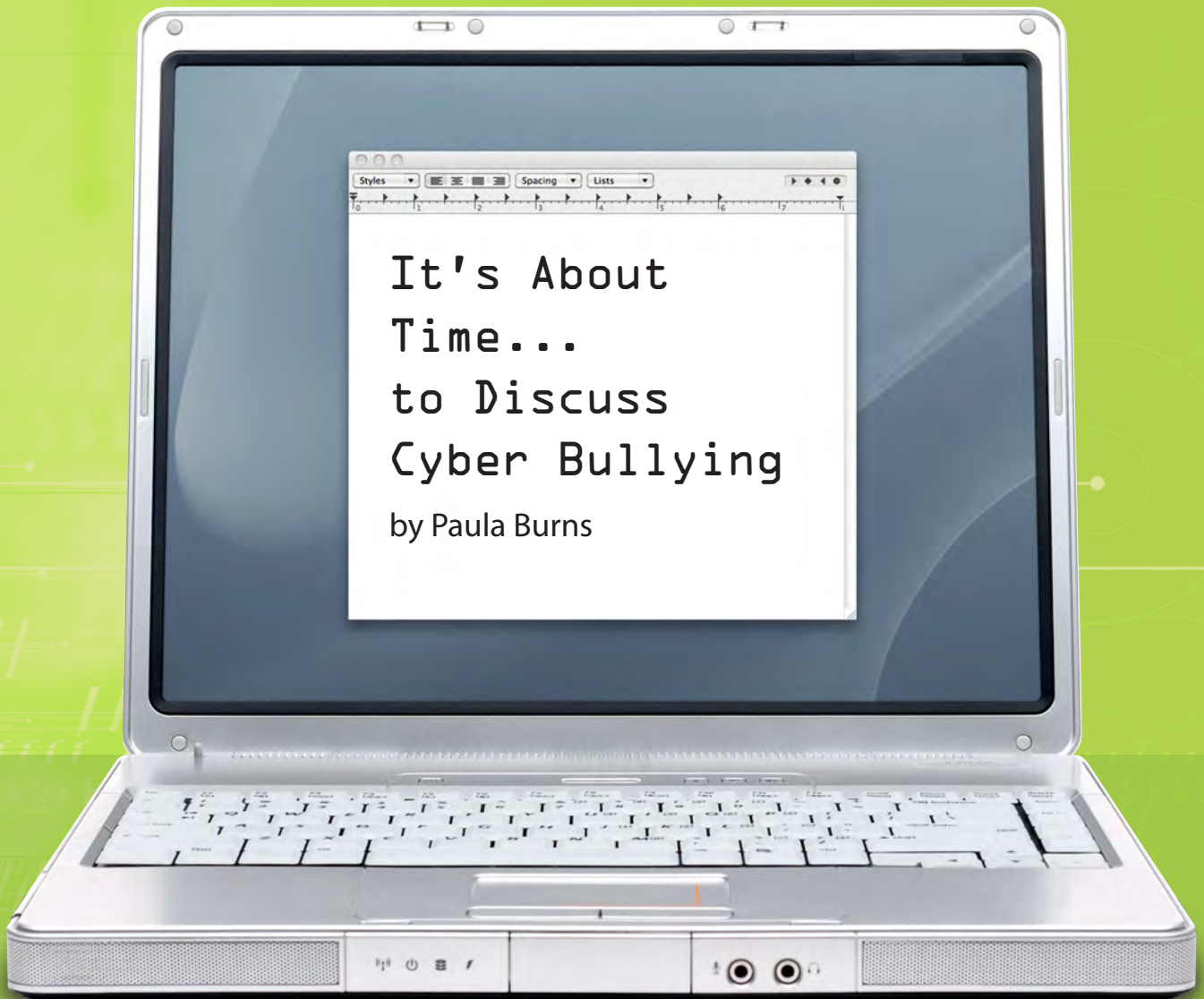
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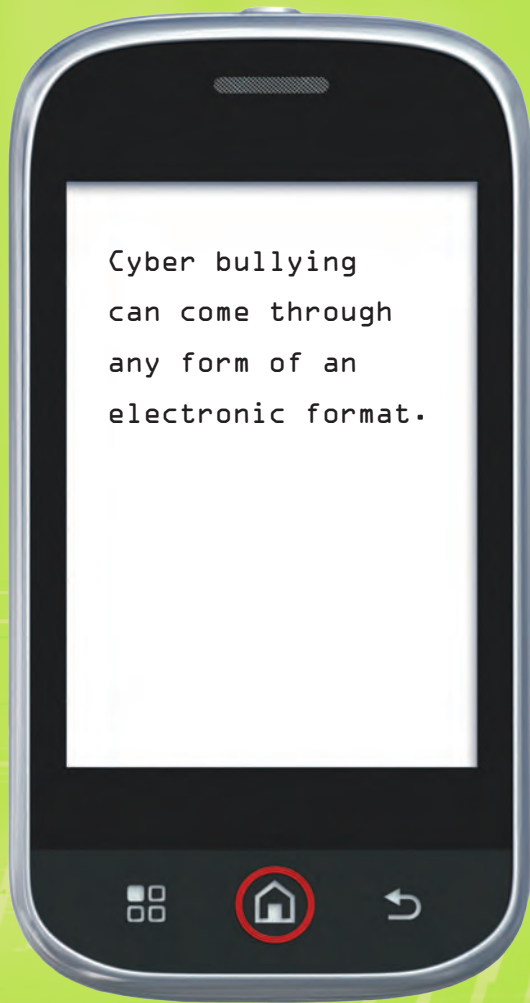
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Think back to years gone by and the way we “used to do things.” The good ol’ days, as it was called. Back in the day when life was lived at a slower pace. We all knew our neighbors, and parents did not have to worry when their kids set up a lemonade stand on the corner block by their home. Parental controls on a computer or television were most definitely not something they had to worry about. Computers were not invented yet and television stations then would not have dreamed of having the content that is now considered approved for viewing audiences. Those were the “Happy Days.”



Today, we are in what is called the internet age. Technology is evolving faster than we can keep up. Out comes a new television and in a few months, a bigger and better version is on the market. The internet has swept the world and has been nothing short of a phenomenon. This new technology age has an upside to it, as it has enabled the church to reach across generational gaps and contact people that would otherwise not have come to church. People can now keep in touch and conduct business worldwide in record time. A major tool used is the informational highway called Social Networking. Facebook is one of the largest social networking sites and their statistics page reflects that more than 500 million users are on Facebook. They claim that more than 50% of those users are logged in every day. This has been a huge attraction to teens and we would submit to you that more of them have a Facebook page than not. Would it shock you to know that one in three teens is being cyber bullied? It was alarming to hear that statistic. When we reflect back on the huge number of the population involved in social networking, it reveals that there is a definite downside to the internet age, and that downside is the impact it is having on our teens in the form of cyber bullying.

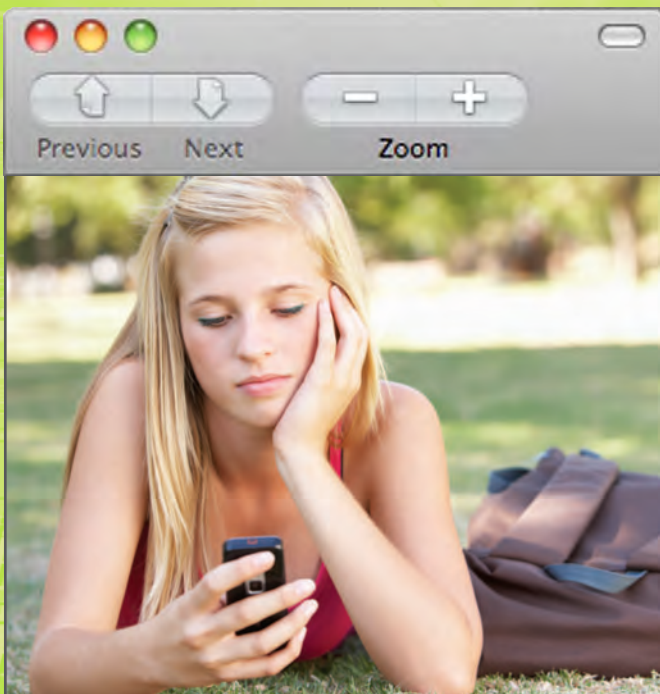
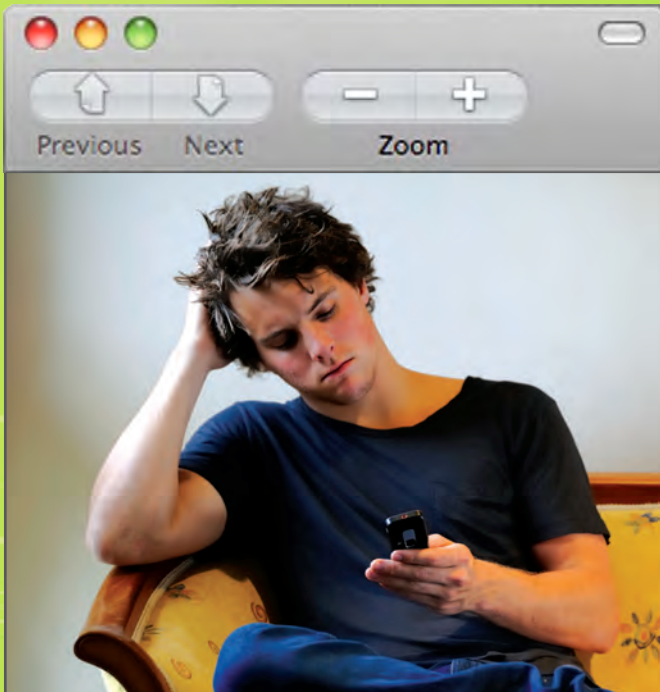
What is "cyber bullying?" Cyber bullying can come via any form of an electronic format, such as harassing Facebook page posts, twitter, email, or texting. Facebook pages can be hacked into and can result in embarrassing or inappropriate content being posted. Teens have so much to deal with in society today and this has become an issue we have to take time to discuss.

The root cause of cyber bullying is bullying and we need to understand the difference between fighting and bullying. "Back in the day" our coach would tell two people who were fighting to sit down, work this out, and shake hands. The difference between kids having

a squabble and kids who are being bullied is huge, and how we handle these situations as adults trying to intervene are completely different. If two people are fighting, you typically have two people standing up for their view or defending their own stance. This can take on many forms, but typically we do not have an imbalance of power in this situation. Bullying takes on a very different stance as listed below:

- Hurtful acts are intentional and repeated by the same individual or group of individuals to another over and over. The key here is these hurtful acts are repeated over and over to the same victim. Forms of bullying include:
 - **Verbal:** Name calling, teasing, vulgar language
 - **Cyber:**
 - Intentionally blocking someone from their online group
 - Posting hurtful things or spreading untruths about someone
 - Pretending to be someone else online in order to make that person look bad
 - Sending mean, vulgar or threatening messages or images
 - **Physical:** Hitting, punching, and taking property
 - **Psychological/Relational:** Social exclusion, spreading rumors or lies
- **There is an imbalance in real or perceived power, and it exists between the bully or bullies and the victim.** This is not the case normally when two individuals are just in a fight and is a key difference.





How do we respond to acts of cyber bullying? The nation learned, in the case of Phoebe Prince, that local school teachers were aware of the bullying she was encountering and did nothing. This is the teen that was bullied and cyber bullied by multiple teens in her school, and it resulted in her committing suicide. The community was outraged and demanded an investigation. During the investigation, it was uncovered that the adults who witnessed this did not know what to do or what procedures to follow. With the statistics showing that one in three teens are encountering this type of harassment, the church needs to realize that this is one-third of their youth group being affected and we need to be trained on how to handle these issues.

Suggestions on ways a youth group leader or volunteer might respond when they learn of or witness a form of bullying...

- Contact the child's parents and help the teen to make them aware of what is occurring.
- Encourage them to not respond to the text messages or whatever form the cyber bullying is being transmitted in.
- Block future calls or messages, if possible; use filtering software.
- Don't erase messages or pictures; save them as evidence.
- See if you can identify the individual or individuals doing the bullying.
- If criminal behavior, contact police.
 - Criminal behavior would be the threat of violence, extortion, obscene messages, hate crimes, or pornography.
- If the bully can be identified, then the parents may want to contact the bully's parents to try to handle this.

- Do NOT put the victim with the bully and try to work this out. Remember, there is an imbalance of power that exists between the bully and the victim.
- Consider contacting an attorney if the bullying does not cease.
- The youth leader may want to monitor the behavior of the affected child/teen and may need to refer them to counseling.
- If the person or persons doing the bullying is a member of your youth group, they need some special monitoring, too.

In September of 2010, a 13-year old local boy committed suicide. His parents believe this was a result of the bullying the child went through at school. The Texas Senate has now responded and has approved “anti-bullying” legislation to give school administrators the authority to step in and prevent ongoing harassment of students. This bill is requiring school boards to adopt procedures in an effort to ban bullying and this would also include cyber bullying. The procedures will be mandated to include providing notice to parents and guardians of both victims and bullies. It also outlines that counseling should be provided to those victimized, and disciplinary steps taken with consequences for those doing the bullying. We are so thankful that measures are now being taken to help protect children. This bill is being returned to the House, and then it goes on to Governor Rick Perry for his signature. Churches also need to be aware that this issue has a huge impact on their youth groups and discuss how to respond when an issue comes to their attention. It is our hope that by bringing awareness to parents and students, they will know how to respond when something does happen in their community or family, and immediately take action to stop the escalation of the harassment.

The insurance industry is scrambling to keep up with the new risks associated with the ever-evolving technology era. There are some Cyber Liability policies coming onto the scene now that are available to churches, and can cover some of the main concerns regarding Internet Liability, Network Security, and various torts in cyber space. This is definitely a topic that the church needs to discuss with their insurance advisor.

There are many help aides to assist in bullying prevention. One website the government created that is very helpful is <http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov>. Bullying prevention themes have been implemented in many schools, and just bringing awareness to parents and children/teens has been very effective. When people know what to do and understand how serious the issue is, then they will be more likely to listen and begin taking precautions with their own children. This is an issue that the team at Insurance One has been an advocate in bringing awareness to. If we can assist in any way, please do not hesitate to email us. ➔

Paula Burns, CIC

Insurance One Agency, The Woodlands, TX



Paula specializes in insuring larger churches and non-profit organizations. She has been in the insurance industry for over 26 years and has earned the prestigious designation of Certified Insurance Counselor (CIC). Her career began in property and casualty claims, laying a foundation for Paula to be an advocate for clients when they need her the most, during a claim or crisis. Having attended seminary at Christian Life School of Theology, now Beacon University, Paula has a heart for serving those who serve. She is a supporter and active member of both Houston NACBA (National Association of Church Business Administrators) chapters. Paula also serves on the board of Church Supplies & Services (Church CO+OP).

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A woman was publicly executed in North Korea recently. Her crime? *Distributing Bibles.*

It's noteworthy that a book most Americans take for granted—and rarely read—was worthy of death in a far corner of the world.



So what makes the Bible so dangerous to an evil regime? What makes it the most feared (and the most revered) book in history? *The Bible has power to change lives.* It delivers cultures from the grasp of evil. It transforms nations. It revives churches. It spawns spiritual revival and awakening.

Yet while we in the West have more Bibles available than any other culture in the history of the world, something is clearly missing. The Bible is having less and less of an impact on our culture and even those who believe it, may secretly be bored by its contents. Why?

Could it be that the Bible's power is only unleashed when it is lived out by God's people? A recent study by the Barna Group¹ suggests that while a whopping 82% of Americans profess to be Christians, three-fourths simultaneously do not believe that the Bible should be the standard for their decisions. For them, application of truth is optional.

Sometimes we are so caught up in defending the inerrancy or inspiration of the Bible that we miss its central point: obedience! Admittedly, *the greatest struggle I face in my walk with God is not learning more truth, but obeying the truth I already know.*

When it comes to revival, there is no greater message needed than obedience to Christ and His Word. Apart from the Word of God, there is no real work of God. A.W. Tozer declared that “prayer will become effective when we stop using it as a substitute for obedience.”

The psalmist knew the *igniting power* of the Word of God, so he cried out, “Revive me according to Your word” (Psalm 119:154 NKJV). Paul knew the *preparatory power* of the Word of God, so he preached the Scripture for over two years in Ephesus before God poured out His Spirit in that city (Acts 19:1-12). And Jesus knew the *transforming power* of the Word of God, so He called the churches in Revelation 2-3 to repentance and fresh obedience to the truth.

The kind of revival we need today is a Word-driven revival. The most powerful revivals in history have been based on the clear proclamation and application of the Bible. When Peter came out of the Upper Room full of the Holy Spirit and the power of Pentecost, his first sermon was saturated with Scripture from Joel and the Psalms. When God sent spiritual awakening to Ephesus, “the *word of the Lord* grew mightily and prevailed” (Acts 19:20, emphasis added). And so it has been throughout the church age—the Word has been the driving force of revival. Here are several steps from F.B. Meyer to help you get into the Bible for yourself:²

Make time for Bible study.

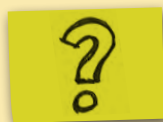


The Divine Teacher ought to have fixed and uninterrupted hours. He deserves our freshest and brightest thoughts, and we must give Him our undivided attention.

Therefore, we should aim at securing at least half an hour each day for the leisurely and loving study of the Bible.

To some, this may seem a long time. However, it is seldom difficult to find time for business or pleasure appointments. If we *mean* to, we *can*. And the time will soon seem all too short. The more you read the Bible, the more you will want to read it.

Ask the Holy Spirit for understanding.



No one can so well explain the meaning of his words as he who wrote them. If you then want to read the Bible as you should, make much of the Holy Spirit who inspired it. As you open the book, lift up your heart and say, “Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your law” (Psalm 119:18 NASB).

Develop a plan for your Bible reading.



There are many Bible reading plans; but on the whole, there is probably no better way than to read it through once every year. It is wise to select a Bible with excellent marginal references, so it is easy to turn to parallel passages.

No one would think of reading a letter, poem, or history as many read God’s Word. What wonder then that they are so ignorant of its majestic prose, its exquisite lyric poetry, its massive arguments, its sublime imagery, and its spiritual beauty! These qualities combine to make it the King of Books.

It is sometimes helpful to read an entire book of the Bible at one sitting, devoting two or three hours to the sacred task. At other times it is more profitable to take an epoch, an episode, or a life, and compare all that is written of it in various parts of the Scripture. There are times when it is good to follow one topic, such as faith or love, by help of a concordance, from end to end of the inspired volume.

Let the whole Bible be your study, because “all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable” (2 Tim. 3:16). Let the Bible be its own dictionary, its own interpreter, its own best commentary. It is like a vast buried city, in which every turn of the spade reveals some new marvel, while passages branch off in every direction, calling for exploration.

Read with pen in hand.



None, in my judgment, have learned the secret of enjoying the Bible until they have begun to mark it neatly—underlining and dating special verses which have cast light on their path on special days; drawing railway connections across the pages between verses which repeat the same message or ring with the same note; jotting down new references or the catchwords of helpful thoughts. All these methods find plenty of employment for the pen, and fix our treasures for us permanently. Our Bible then becomes the precious memento of bygone hours, recording the history of our inner life.

Eagerly seek your personal profit.



During this time, do not read the Bible for others, for class or congregation, but for yourself. Bring all its rays to focus on your own heart. Never close the book until you feel that you are carrying away your portion of the meat. It is good at times to stop reading and seriously ask, “What does the Holy Spirit mean *me* to learn by this? What bearing should this have on my life? How can I work this into the fabric of my character?”

Turn reading into prayer.



If an example of holiness gleams before you, ask God to do as much for you. If a truth is revealed in all its intrinsic splendor, entreat that its brilliance may ever illuminate your life. If a cluster of heavenly fruit hangs within reach, gather it. If a promise lies on the page as a blank check, cash it. If a prayer is recorded, appropriate it and launch it as a feathered arrow from the bow of your desire.

Entwine the climbing creepers of holy desire about the latticework of Scripture. So shall you come to say with

the psalmist, “Oh, how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day” (Psa. 119:97). (It is sometimes good to read over Psalm 119 on our knees; it is so full of devout love for the Bible.)

Practice what you learn.



I have saved this one thing for last because it is most important and should linger in the memory and heart: *It is useless to dream of making headway in the knowledge of Scripture unless we are prepared to practice what we read.* We are taught not for our pleasure only, but that we may do.

If we will turn each holy precept or command into instant obedience through the dear grace of Jesus Christ our Lord, God will keep nothing back from us. He will open to us His deepest and sweetest thoughts. But so long as we refuse obedience to even the least command, we shall find that the light will fade from the pages of Scripture, and the zest will die down quickly in our hearts.

At Life Action Ministries, our mission is to ignite movements of God’s power by motivating Christians to live the truth of the Bible. That’s what we think will turn our culture around. That’s why I’m inviting you to rediscover your passion for studying *and living* God’s Word. ✚

Byron Paulus



Byron Paulus is the Director of Life Action Ministries, an organization that exists to ignite movements of Christ-centered revival and spiritual awakening. To learn more, go to www.LifeAction.org.

¹www.barna.org/barna-update/article/13-culture/268-casual-christians-and-the-future

²Adapted from Fredrick Brotherton Meyer’s meditations in *Light on Life’s Duties* (Fleming H. Revell Co., 1895, pages 72–85).

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Dr. Stephen Trammell

Keynote Speaker

Dr. Stephen Trammell has been selected as the 2012 Texas Ministry Conference mid-day Keynote Speaker. He is a dynamic and captivating speaker as well as a yearly conference favorite. Stephen preaches, teaches, leads, mentors and writes online devotionals. He is the author of two books, *Pursuing God: A Daily Encounter*, released in 2010, and *Living Water; A Daily Experience*, released in May 2011.

Dr. Trammell is the Executive Pastor of Champion Forest Baptist Church, a church that features nine worship venues, and a vibrant Life Group ministry with over 4,000 participants. He is responsible for leadership development, staff meetings, strategic planning and vision implementation.



Dr. Julie Bell

Keynote Speaker

Dr. Julie Bell will kick-off our Conference as the morning Keynote Speaker. She is the founder and president of The Mind of a Champion, a coaching firm in Dallas, Texas. The Mind of a Champion (MOC) is focused on working with organizations that seek to improve their Performance Intelligence. Julie focuses on taking the core principles of sport psychology and transferring them to the athletic playing field, as well as the corporate playing field. Her proprietary methodology of training Performance Intelligence reaches audiences at all levels on a team. Her book, *Performance Intelligence at Work: The Five Essentials of Achieving The Mind of a Champion* was released by McGraw-Hill in 2009.

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The
BIGGEST
by Gary Milbourne
LOSER

Who is the biggest loser when it comes to Time Management?

Okay... well, nothing like starting off with a question to stir up strife in the church office! But seriously, the painful reality is that when others on your church staff are disorganized, run late, miss deadlines, etc., who is the Biggest Loser? You and your whole staff are. Or...is it the whole church? Wow! Two tough questions in the first paragraph!

It doesn't matter if the church is Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, or whatever denomination. There are some common characteristics among churches and their staff members, and some common challenges they all seem to face. I want to address some of these issues and hopefully get you moving in the right direction to not only help you, but also help you to help your office's Biggest Loser.

So let's look at a few reasons why we see things the way we do, and how we can possibly adjust our way of thinking.


Personalities, Styles, and Other Labels

There's the DISC: Dominant, Influential, Steadiness, and Compliance. Gary Smalley's Animals: Lion, Otter, Golden Retriever, and Beaver. The Meyers-Briggs list of 16...

can't even begin to name them all! There's Tim LaHaye's Spirit-Controlled Temperaments of Choleric, Sanguine, Melancholy, and Phlegmatic. And don't forget Office Depot's list...Paper Clip, Stapler, Shredder, and Copier. Okay, so I just made that last set up. Anyway, I think there is some truth in most of these paradigms and they are fun tests to take. But there's a bigger message in the results and it goes beyond your own self-examination.

It's these differences in styles/personalities that cause your church staff to fit together and run like a well-oiled machine, or make you sputter along like a Dodge Neon running on three cylinders. Of course, there are some churches that have a third possibility: a staff that is made up of a dominant pastor or administrator, and a crew of "yes men" and "yes women." But most of you are dealing with one of the first two.

Ready for some more controversy? In the hundreds of churches for which I've done staff training, guess who is most often named the "Biggest Loser?" You guessed it... the Senior Pastor! Is that ironic or what? Some would question how he/she got to be the leader, and it's a good question! Here's why: In most cases, they are a big picture person and/or an extremely creative person seeing the glorious sunrise and paying little attention to details. The big picture/creative people that are the most successful do one of two things, or a combination thereof: 1) they surround themselves with detail people to cover the bases that they miss while on their way to home plate, or 2) they learn to balance their style by



growing in the areas in which they are weak. Plan 1 is usually more expensive on the church budget. Plan 2 takes years of growth and has a point of diminishing return; thus the need for a combination solution.

At our church, my pastor and I have a great working relationship. I like the way he described it once: "I'm a get it done person. Gary is a get it done right person." At first glance, that may sound like he was cutting himself and giving me the higher role. But, while he is usually complimentary, that was not the main point. He was saying that if you want something done now and need it to be done quickly, he's your guy. But if there's time, and you're looking over the long haul, Gary's your guy. There's balance in that view because both of us are necessary. That's why we make a good team.

So what is your style? Is that how your coworkers would describe you? And which of the other styles gets on your nerves the most? The answers are only beneficial if they point us toward the reason God has put all of you together on the same team. Solomon said "Iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend." (Proverbs 27:17) While not an expert in metallurgy, I do know that when two pieces of iron sharpen one another, there's heat and sparks are going to fly! So don't necessarily pray that God moves that other staff person to a church in North Dakota. You might miss out on some needful sharpening!

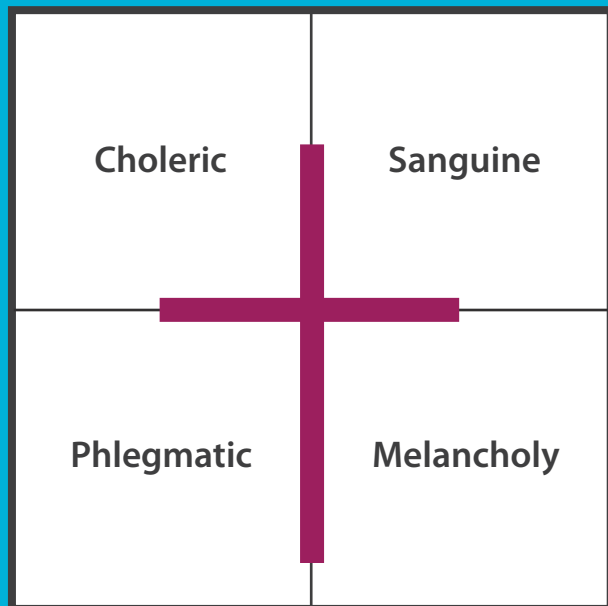
Consider Jesus!

Whichever personality test you pick, they all point out strengths and weaknesses of each type or style. I believe that Jesus had the strengths of all of the personalities/ types and the weaknesses of none! Jesus could be the "D" that cleansed the temple. He was the analytical Phlegmatic standing by the treasury when the widow put in her mites. He was the "Big Picture" person when he astonished the multitudes with His teaching, as well as the relational/one-to-one person with the woman at the well. If it is our purpose in life to glorify Christ by becoming more like Him (and it is!), then we must expand our horizons beyond what the four-page personality test says we are and learn from those that God has placed around us!

The Visionary leader must continue with his/her grand plans, while realizing how those plans are going to affect the nursery workers. The Phlegmatic bookkeeper should always be looking at the cost of everything, but never lose sight of the people that cheerfully give the money (as well as the ones that don't). The creative music director must reel in her creative bursts of energy at times, especially when it means getting their information in for the bulletin on time...for a change! Even I, the person who plans out his day in 15 minute increments, have to stop and realize that there are interruptions to my "perfect plan" that are from God Himself.



So when you put people into the chart that is divided into four quadrants, which so many of these personality charts are, realize that when you draw the lines in the middle of that diagram, what is in the middle very much resembles a cross!



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It's all about the 80/20!

I remember when I was a youth pastor just starting in the ministry: young, energetic, charismatic and...stupid! (Just like your youth pastor, right?) I wanted a business card to promote a new exciting discipleship group that was meeting on Sunday nights. I foolishly thought to myself that I would make the card on my own. After almost an entire day of cutting and pasting (remember clip art?), I had a stack of unprofessional, sloppy cards that probably cost more than if I had just gone ahead and paid a professional to make them!

Where I went wrong is where the "Biggest Losers" of time often do: I was spending 80% of my time that day on something that could only yield 20% effective results. The printer down the street could do a much better card with 20% effort and yield an 80% (if not 500%) better card. There are talents, skills and abilities you have that allow you to do things with only 20% effort (compared to some people) and get the 80% kind of results. These are the things that you love to do, others love to see you do, and is what God has created you to do! These are the type of projects, tasks, and programs that He wants you to spend the bulk (roughly 80%) of your time on!

We are all the "Biggest Losers" when we allow distractions, lack of focus, poorly written job descriptions, and yes, even laziness, get us away from the things we do best.

A more recent example 25 years later: The Sunday Bulletin! You know that work of art that takes hours of blood, sweat, ink, and tears? The one that must look perfect in every detail, even though no one will notice, except for your resident nit-picking, human spell-checkers? It's expensive to produce, under-appreciated, and not really all that effective, especially when it is left on the floor after church is over. Well, a few months back, like many churches had already done, I proposed we abolish this paper dinosaur. After all, the 1st century church didn't have a bulletin (did they?). This ancient means of communication was replaced with large screen TV in the lobby and the announcements

scrolling on the screens of the auditorium before, between, and after services, as well as improvements to the website, more Facebook postings, and an app on my iPhone to GroupText our entire church on a regular basis. (Haven't quite gotten to the Twitter thing yet).

As you can tell, it's not all that technologically profound. But nonetheless, very effective for our congregation. This was truly one of those 80/20 instances! I think our church is 80% more informed with only 20% of the effort.

In conclusion...

Be flexible. Be humble. Be willing to take the proverbial long look in the mirror and see where you are a Big Loser. Then look at who God is using around you to bring balance to your way of doing things. Finally, take a longer look at what you are doing and how effective it really is. ✦

Gary Milbourne



Gary has been in full-time ministry for over 20 years and is the Associate Pastor at Lighthouse Baptist Church in Dickinson, Texas. He and his wife Tammy have four kids in Christian colleges training for the ministry and four at home driving them crazy! Gary does church staff training on subjects like Time Management for Church Staff Professionals, Balancing Church & Personal Life, The Organized Office, and Stress Management.

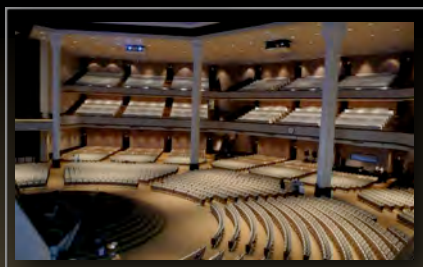


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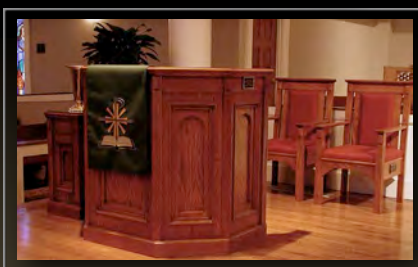
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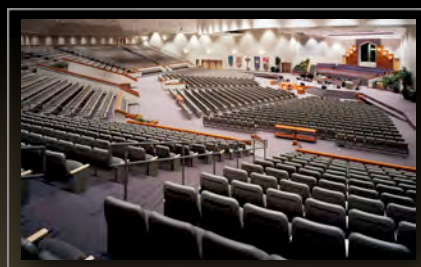
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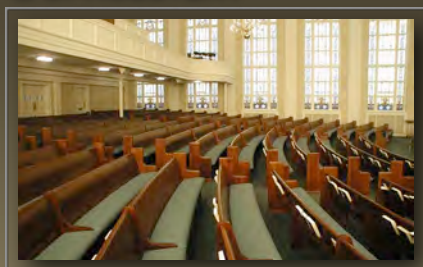
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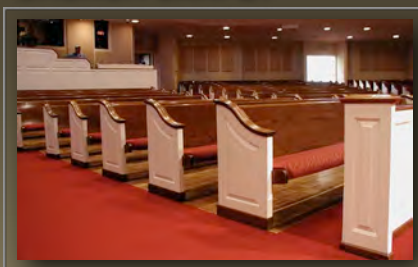
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Time for Building Teams

by Dr. Karen Y. Wilson-Starks

Zach sat in the company conference room with his head in his hands and wondered if he was the right man for the job. Since being promoted to Executive Director a year ago, he's felt inadequate to address the myriad complexities of Abba Care, a ministry that provides services to poor children and their families in the United States. Prior to the promotion, Zach headed the division of Abba Care responsible for providing daily meals. As he reminisced, Zach recalled how he knew everything about the Meals Division...the issues, the decisions, and recommended next steps. Life was easier with a small staff, questions he could answer, and limited outside interference.

Today in Zach's senior team meeting, Kelly, the head of the Health and Medical Division said to Rob of Education, "The Johnson children need to go in for their medical appointments, especially Joshua who is autistic. This is the third time we have scheduled major conflicts." Rob replied, "Yeah, our divisions are not talking to each other, so we keep making the same mistakes over and over."

As Zach thought about the senior leadership team, he realized that he wasn't fully capitalizing on the brain power in the room to address strategic issues and furthermore, there was insufficient coordination for everyday activities. Zach saw that his divisions could no longer keep operating as silos. Also, as the senior leader, he couldn't keep coming up with next steps in isolation. The ministry had grown too large and the issues too involved for one person to know everything and to call all of the shots. What if his senior team became a high-performance team? What else would then be possible?

Complexity: The Case for High-Performance Teams

High-performance teams make the most sense if there is a complex task to accomplish. Zach realized that the intricate array of Abba Care services such as meals, clothes, education, tutoring, life and job skills training for parents, health and medical services, housing, transportation, and spiritual development qualified for the level of complexity inherent with high-performance teams. Not only did he have to coordinate with internal Abba Care staff, but for many of the services, community partnerships were also involved. He'd have to rely on his team to determine the best practices for moving forward efficiently, cost effectively, and in ways that best supported the families. Gone were the days when he could single-handedly know what was going on and make the best decisions.

Clear Purpose: The Orienting Call

The Abba Care Senior Leadership team was very clear about their mission to provide a high quality of life and opportunity to poor United States-based children and

their families. The challenge was that each division was attempting to achieve that purpose independently, as opposed to working together and operating on the same page. High-performance teams use clear purpose as their orienting call for collective alignment and synergy.

Talented and Skilled Team Members: The Building Blocks


Over the years, Abba Care had done a lot of housecleaning and recruitment to get the best people on board to head up and work in the various ministry divisions. Zach knew he had great people who had the skills necessary to do the work for which they were hired. In one case, he moved a leader from transportation services to education because his skills and expertise were in education. A year ago when he took the Executive Director job, he hired a new leader for the Life and Job Skills division and that leader has hired people with the background to get the job done. He still may need to make a change in the Spiritual Development Division; however, he is waiting to see if that senior leader can be further developed in the role. Ministries are often reluctant to move, replace, or recruit the talent they need, yet the right people represent the building blocks for high performance.

Resources: The Fuel for Forward Motion

If there is no gas in the car, then you won't get far and the same is true for high-performance teams. Just as you won't get high performance out of a car without adequate energy resources, you don't get high performance from teams that don't have the necessary money, connections, or other resources for success. Zach realized that his primary job as senior leader was to find talent and resource the team, including providing necessary structures for strategic conversations.

Reward Structures: Reinforce and Duplicate Success

When Zack was head of the Meals Division, he was rewarded for providing high-quality meals for as many poor children as possible. He was also rewarded for establishing



Many ministries make the mistake of saying they want teamwork, but then only reward individual success. At the end of the day, what you get is what you reward.

innovative partnerships with community providers. It was because of his success in the Meals Division that he was tapped for the Executive Director role. What he realizes now is that if he wants his divisions to work well together or his senior team to become strategic thinking partners with him, then he will have to reward those behaviors and not just individual success efforts. Many ministries make the mistake of saying they want teamwork, but then only reward individual success. At the end of the day, what you get is what you reward.

Continuous Learning Culture: The Hallmark of High Performance

The variable that most characterizes teams as high-performance is their commitment to continuous learning together. Jesus was one of the greatest exemplars of creating high performance through continuous learning. He regularly told parables and then interpreted them to His disciples. He also regularly used everyday events as object lessons, such as the withering of the fig tree (Matthew 21:18-21, Mark 11:20-26), the casting out of the deaf and mute spirit in a boy (Matthew 17:14-21, Mark 9: 17-29), and the healing of the man born blind (John 9). Some of the lessons taught were the need to be fruitful, the power of faith to move mountains, the necessity of prayer and fasting, and the idea that not all disease and hardship is due to

sin, but that God may be glorified. Jesus also engaged the disciples in the learning process and asked them provocative questions such as “Who do men say that I am?” and “Who do you say that I am?” (Matthew 16:13-20, Mark 8:27-30)

Zack realizes he will have to engage his senior team in the issues of the organization and create the conditions for them to think together about the work they are doing. Feedback loops and mechanisms will be crucial, so not only will they do after-action reviews...such as those I experienced when serving as an active duty Army Psychologist... but he will also prompt mid-action reviews and reflection periods so that his senior team can take stock of what is and isn't working now, and do real time mid-course corrections for greater effectiveness.

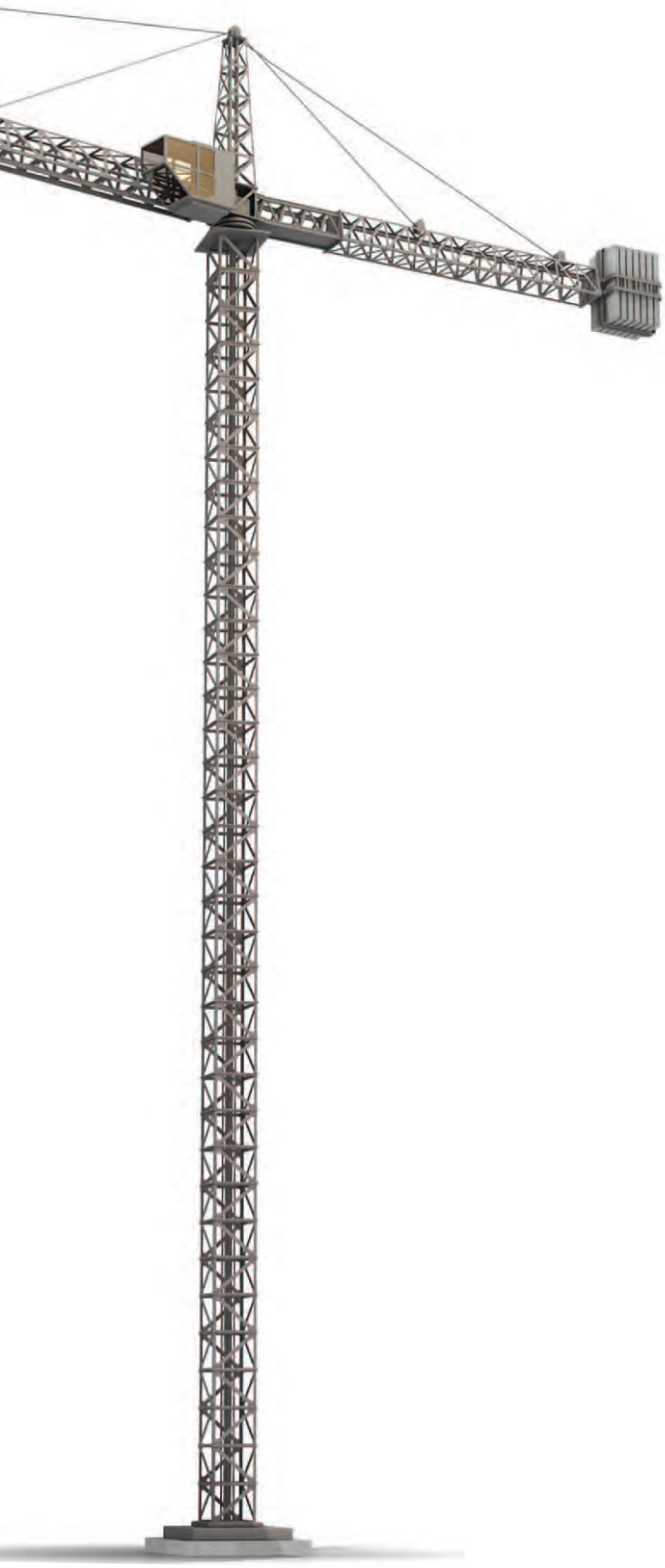
To the extent that Zack is able to convene his senior leadership team and create the conditions for high performance, then he is the right man for the job. What about you? Does your scenario fit the conditions for high-performance teamwork? Will you be the architect to put all of the high performance elements together for your team? It's time to build teams! ✦

Dr. Karen Y. Wilson-Starks



Dr. Karen Y. Wilson-Starks is the President and CEO of TRANSLEADERSHIP, INC. She regularly helps corporate, government/military, and faith-based leaders to lead more powerfully and effectively. She is also the author of the forthcoming book, “If Marriages are Made in Heaven, How did Mine Get Stuck on Earth?” Please contact her at DrKyws@aol.com; 719-534-0949, ext. 1; or www.transleadership.com

Note: The story of Abba Care is based on a real client case; however, the names and details have been changed. ©2011 TRANSLEADERSHIP, INC.



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banknotes

by Vonna Laue

More Effective and Less Painful Budgeting

Many of you may remember the old commercial with the baker who dragged himself out of bed in the middle of the night moaning, “Time to make the donuts.” He did this every night so that fresh donuts would be ready for customers early in the morning. And as we approach the fall, we begin to moan, “Time to start the budget.” We look forward to this with no more enthusiasm than we would to getting out of bed in the middle of the night.

Budget planning used to be an annual event. Whether due to better procedures or a worse economy, we now look at it as more of an ongoing process. We begin the process in the fall and hope to have it finalized by the beginning of the year. Then each month throughout the year, or at least each quarter, we review the actual results against the budget and determine if modifications are necessary.

No wonder many of us dread this process! But it doesn't have to be that way. This article offers tips and considerations to help make your budget planning more effective and less painful.

The most important thing to remember is that the driving factors in your church should be reflected in your budget. Before you begin the budget process, consider the vision and mission of your church. What is your particular emphasis? Who are you trying to

reach? What are the desired outcomes? The answers to these questions should drive where the dollars are invested—and even where they come from. You may need to scale back some ministries to free up finances for another ministry that is part of the core purpose of the church.

Next, consider whether your budget should be prepared in a top-down or bottom-up process, or some combination of the two. Top-down is faster and easier. In this method, the top leadership, board, or finance committee dictates what the budget will be and expects everyone to fall in line with it. The bottom-up approach is much slower, with input solicited from the various ministry areas in the church. The individual budgets are then accumulated and summarized into the church-wide budget. This yields the most buy-in from ministry heads. It takes a long time, however, because the total expenses typically end up far surpassing the expected income. It may work best to provide some basic guidelines and solicit input from those with budget areas, but provide enough specific guidance to eliminate an excessive amount of work.

Then decide which type of budget to use. The most common is an incremental budget, in which you use the prior budget and adjust incrementally up or down based on expected changes. This is the easiest to prepare and may be very useful if you are willing to analyze each account carefully.

You can also use the zero-based budget. This is more difficult to assemble because you begin with a clean slate. Rather than looking at how much was paid for postage last year and adjusting, you would determine how much will be used this year and budget accordingly. That may not seem complicated until you realize just how many income and expense accounts there are in your chart of accounts.

Finally, plan ahead. As you work through the budget process, keep in mind which costs are fixed versus which are variable. If you need to adjust the church's expenses during the year, there are certain amounts that are off limits. The interest expense on a loan, for example, is unlikely to change

significantly unless you are able to completely renegotiate the terms. Utilities will be consistent over time and unless you plan to cut back on heating or air-conditioning your worship services, there is only so much you can do. Other costs may be more flexible, however, such as not rehiring for a vacant position. Another example would be finding someone willing to put a Vacation Bible School program together using a team of volunteers rather than buying a curriculum. There are countless ways you can trim your expenses, but not for every expense line.

You should also consider using multiple budgets. Preparing three budgets doesn't take three times as long as preparing one. Once you have completed the first budget, it's quite simple to make adjustments. Multiple budgets allow you to know where cuts will be made if the income doesn't come in, and which ministries can be expanded if you receive more contributions than planned. This helps to minimize ministry heads fighting over scarce resources or trying to get "their fair share" of the abundance. If you prepare multiple budgets that are aligned with the vision of the church, your leadership team should be united and able to reach an amicable resolution on whatever budget situations you face.

Rather than dreading the start of this year's budget cycle, I encourage you to think about what a blessing it is to be part of the ministry of your church. Focus on the impact your church is making and realize the support role you play in accomplishing this. Rather than moaning "Time to start the budget," maybe this year's mantra can become, "Time to see what God might do!" ✦

Vonna Laue



Vonna Laue is a partner with Capin Crouse, LLP where she is involved in auditing and consulting with Christian ministries. She speaks for regional and national conferences and has written for a variety of publications. Vonna was the 2010 recipient of the NACBA Hall of Fame award. You can reach Vonna at value@capincrouse.com or 714-671-9300, ext. 229.



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A wooden sign shaped like a house, with the text "It's Time to Get Your House in Order" written on it. The sign is made of dark brown wood and is set against a background of green grass and a blurred green background.

It's Time to Get Your House in Order

by Elaine L. Sommerville, CPA

Foundations...no house is built without a foundation. We all understand how critical a good foundation is to the integrity of the house. Weak foundations, poorly constructed foundations, or cracked foundations cause a house to begin to weaken. Foundations are so important that a faulty one can totally devalue a house, no matter the outside appearance. Likewise, foundations are important to churches, but churches have two foundations on which they are built; a spiritual foundation and a business foundation. Many times, churches take great care to build and maintain the spiritual foundation of a church. However, since the business foundation is sometimes viewed as boring and bureaucratic, it will often be ignored or receive the least attention possible. However, a weak business foundation can be as devastating to a church as a weak or cracked spiritual foundation.

Governing Documents

Policies

Minutes

We live in one of the most highly regulated periods of our country's history and churches are not free from all of this regulation. It is true that there are few people or organizations to which churches have to be directly accountable. Without direct outside accountability, a church may remain more focused on its spiritual foundation rather than its business foundation. However, the climate is changing and despite a lesser amount of obvious scrutiny, it is time for churches to get their houses in order and strengthen their business foundations.

It's All About Governance

Governance is the buzz word in the non-profit world. Governance is the set of processes, customs, policies, and laws that affect the way a church is directed, administered or controlled. The IRS believes there is a strong correlation between strong and healthy governance, and an organization that is in compliance with the laws governing non-profits. Good governance is evident when a church has a strong operational structure and therefore, is the cornerstone of building a strong business foundation.

Governing Documents

Good governance starts with the core governing documents of a church. These traditionally are the articles of incorporation (articles of formation) and the bylaws (may also be referred to as the constitution). Many times these documents are created when a church is created. Over time, they may be forgotten and the way a church functions may stray from the way it was authorized in these core documents.

- Articles of Incorporation (Formation) – All 501(c)(3) organizations are required to meet an organizational test. To meet the required organizational test, the articles are required to contain four key provisions:
 - A purpose clause that states that the activities of the organization are within the exempt purposes allowed for 501(c)(3) organizations;
 - A provision against the existence of inurement of benefit;
 - A prohibition against involvement in political campaigns, but which allows for an insubstantial involvement in legislative activities; and

- A dissolution clause that requires the assets of the church be given to another 501(c)(3) organization upon dissolution.

Note: Sometimes older churches and denominational churches do not meet the above requirements. Since they have never been required to provide their articles of incorporation to the IRS, the articles have never been reviewed for all of these provisions.

Each church incorporated in Texas should confirm that it is in good standing with the Texas Secretary of State. Due to certain events, a church's corporate charter may have been forfeited by the Secretary of State. The church should also maintain a current registered agent with the state. This is who the state will contact if it has questions regarding the church.

- Bylaws (Constitution) – This document defines the manner in which the church is allowed to operate. A church needs to be familiar with its bylaws.
 - The document defines who governs the church, as well as how it is governed. The IRS has revoked the tax exempt status of an organization where it did not follow its bylaws as to its operations. Many times, the way a church is governed changes over the years and does not align with its bylaws.
 - Churches are subject to state law. Texas non-profits, including churches, should have these documents reviewed and updated in light of changes in Texas law that were effective January 2010. These changes require virtually every non-profit to revise and update its bylaws.

Policies

The second stage of good governance begins with the implementation of policies. At a minimum, the church should consider policies in the following areas:

- Conflict of interest;
- Whistleblower;
- Records retention and document destruction;
- Political activities;
- Financial (a variety should be considered);
- Employment (a variety should be considered); and
- Gift acceptance.

Churches that have adopted foundational policies should perform a periodic review to see if the policies are being

adhered to. If a church doesn't require adherence to the policies, it might as well forego adopting the policies.

Minutes

All churches have someone making the key decisions for the church. It may be a centralized board type of governance or it may be a decentralized committee type of governance. In any event, the actions of the governing bodies do not exist unless they are documented.

- Minutes of all meetings of the governing bodies should be maintained in writing.
- Minutes should be maintained in a secure location at the church or under church control. They may be maintained electronically.
- Minutes should never be maintained in the personal possession of a person. Minutes maintained at someone's house have a tendency to disappear.
- Churches with committees should provide guidelines as to what is required to be maintained in the committee minutes, as well as where and how the minutes are to be stored.

There are books and manuals written to assist non-profit organizations in establishing a strong foundation of governance. This article presents three key areas that are of utmost importance to every church and that tend to be the weakest pieces in the foundation. While often considered to be restrictive to the accomplishment of the spiritual foundation, the ability of a church to withstand a storm will more often than not rest on the strength of its business foundation. ✚

Elaine L. Sommerville, CPA



Elaine Sommerville is licensed as a certified public accountant by the State of Texas. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accountancy and Information Systems from the University of Texas of the Permian Basin. She is currently the sole shareholder of the firm of Sommerville & Associates, P.C. Elaine is a regular speaker for the Texas Society of CPAs, the National Association of Church Business

Administration, the Houston Texas Ministry ConferenceSM and an instructor for the American Institute for Certified Public Accountants (AICPA). In 2011, she is being inducted into the National Association of Church Business Administration's Hall of Fame for her outstanding service to churches during her career.



morepower^{to}you

by Michael Bernstein

It's About Time – The Future is Here!

Okay, all you gadget people...watch out for what is coming into your home. In Texas, the latest electricity metering technology is here!

Remember watching the Jetson's on TV? George, Jane, Judy and Elroy Jetson enjoyed Rosie the Robot and all the gadgets in their futuristic world, and that got us curious about *our* future.

But you don't have to be curious much longer...the Public Utility Commission's ERCOT website is suggesting that the future is just around the corner. The new smart meters will be coming to your home soon, if they are not already there. And in a short amount of time, your appliances will be talking to your meter...with the meter guiding them through their operations in ways that will reduce costs and control consumption.

In the meantime, there are many benefits to be expected, as itemized below in the write-up by ERCOT, published on the Public Utility Commission website at <https://portal.puc.state.tx.us/consumer/electricity/Metering.aspx>. Also, check out the exciting TES Energy Services announcement at the end of this article.

Smart Metering

Smart Meters or Advanced Metering System (AMS):

Every residence or business has an on-site electric meter that registers the amount of energy consumed. Currently, these meters are read monthly by

meter readers who come to your home or organization and record the usage displayed on the face of the unit. This usage represents the total kilowatt hours (kWh), or electrical units, that were consumed for the previous month (billing cycle).

Metering technology has evolved substantially over the years, and the current mechanical meters are beginning to be replaced by more efficient Smart Meters. These new meters have digital communications' capabilities. Initially, these meters will process and confirm energy consumption directly through your Transmission and Distribution Utility (TDU). When fully implemented, this state-of-the-art technology will help provide all consumers with many features.

Features of Smart Meters:

- Your meter will be read without a meter reader having to come to your home.
- Your meter can be re-read much faster, should you have questions.
- The new meters will record electricity use in 15-minute intervals instead of once a month like the old meters, providing customers more choice and control over their electric usage and expenses.
- Smart Meters will provide instant power outage notice to your TDU, and support more reliable and efficient electric delivery to your home.
- Since in-person meter readings will not be required, the number of vehicles on the road will be reduced, thus reducing pollution, traffic, and fuel consumption.
- Eventually, you will have access to detailed readings of your electricity use and corresponding price.
- As meters are installed and enabled, the time needed to process service orders, such as starting or stopping service, will be reduced.
- In the future, the meters will be able to communicate with programmable devices (like your air conditioner or dishwasher) through a Home Area Network (HAN) module to monitor and control electricity consumption.
- You will have more choice and control over your electric usage and bill.
- Additional features will be developed as technology advances.

Smart Meter Costs

In 2005, the Texas Legislature directed the Public Utility Commission (PUC) to authorize electric delivery companies to assess a surcharge to recover the costs of Smart Meters. This surcharge will be shared among all electricity users receiving a new meter, and will be added to customers' bills.

When will I get my Smart Meter?

Smart Meter distribution has already begun in some communities. Most companies are planning to distribute the meters in phases. Check with your TDU, municipality, or co-op to find out about their Smart Meter plans, costs, and distribution dates.

Let's hope they work in ways that will benefit us all. Here's to the future—coming to your neighborhood soon!

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Looking forward to assisting you!

TES NEWS: TES Energy Services, LP now has offices in Houston, as well as our existing office in the Dallas area! It's about time! ✨

Michael Bernstein

TES Energy Services, LP
Phone: 972-447-0447 x105



Michael is the CO+OP account manager for TES Energy Services, LP. He possesses detailed knowledge of the energy industry along with expertise in sales and marketing, training/development, customer relations operations and non-profit management. Michael has built strategic offerings for commercial and residential clients, demonstrating opportunities to save money in electricity. You can reach him at mbernstein@tesenergyservices.com.



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Mark Curtis 800.728.4120 SAT
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Brian Taylor 210.722.5132 SAT
btaylor@hillyard.com

Jason Walton 210.655.3201 SAT
jwalton@hillyard.com

Rosie Reyes 956.206.4355 Laredo
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Jim Funderburgh 214.704.1770
jfunderburgh@cleancaretx.com

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pdalton@dtkinc.com

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CO+OP Vendor Ads *Alphabetical Listing*

American Business Machines *Page 27*

American Institute for

Servant Leadership *Page 12*

Bank of the West *Page 18*

Blackmon Mooring *Page 8*

Carlson Roofing Co., Inc. *Page 29*

Champion Forest A/C & Heating *Page 36*

Church Interiors, Inc. *Page 29*

Cleancare, Inc.

included in Hillyard ad *Page 33*

Creative Coffee, Inc. *Page 12*

Dahill *Page 2*

Denitech *Page 2*

DTK, Inc. *Page 7*

Educational Products, Inc. *Page 12*

Hillyard, Inc. *Page 33*

Insurance One Agency *Page 36*

Integrity Furniture & Equipment *Page 27*

Mity-Lite Tables & Chairs *Page 8*

Mustang Lighting & Supply *Page 43*

National Signs *Page 48*

Office Depot Business

Solutions Division *Page 9*

Professional Janitorial Service

of Houston *Page 8*

TES Energy, Inc. *Page 47*

Upright Ministries *Page 36*

Become a Member and Grow Together with the Foundation of Good Stewardship Resources ...the Church CO+OP

CO+OP: the original group purchasing organization for churches and their related organizations, including schools, camps and para-church ministries.

What CO+OP is: Our CO+OP is a non-profit, 501(c)3 group purchasing relationship, in business since 1988, operated by a board of directors. We are Members and Vendors working together to provide significant savings on goods and services.

Why CO+OP: The purpose of our CO+OP is to help ministries save money on the goods and services they are buying. Examples include:

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- electricity
- food service
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- printing
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- IT services and equipment
- repair and replace A/V electronic devices
- personnel, finance, risk reduction & insurance
- janitorial and sanitation supplies and tools
- roofing and construction
- flooring/floor mats
- custom office stamps
- furniture and equipment
- janitorial service
- maintenance, repair parts and tools
- disaster recovery and carpet cleaning
- advertising and promotional items
- church consulting

Vendors with a national presence include:

- Blackmon Mooring
- Church Interiors
- National Signs
- Office Depot
- Upright Ministries
- Mity-Lite
- Euliss Consulting
- Hillyard
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How to participate: Join online at www.churchco-op.org or phone 888.350.3264 to enroll.

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First Christian Church, Pasadena, TX

First United Methodist Church, Joshua, TX

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Keller, TX

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McKinney, TX

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