

COSP

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Protecting His Ministry

Feature Article by Dr. Everett Piper
on page 14

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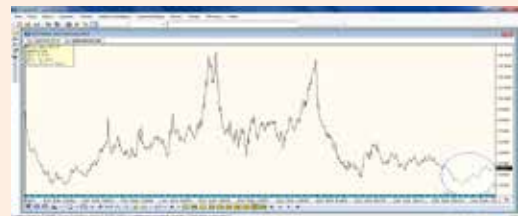
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Keep your contact information current. The lifeline of communication to our members is through correct contact information, i.e. key contact names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Send all updates to patti@churchco-op.org. Help us keep you informed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

Living with a retired Air Force and Houston Police Officer has taught the Malott family that not only is there a need for security and protection, but we need to know *how* to protect our family from potential harm. The military experience was quite different from the police experience.

The Air Force had procedures and processes in place that officers knew they must follow for the betterment of the division and for their own good. Orders came down and orders were followed. Our family took on that mentality in the sense that when a decision was made, there were not many contradictions or much whining. We all just knew that certain processes were needed for everyone's protection.

Having a police officer as part of the family taught us the *how* of protection. We learned how to handle a gun properly, never pointing it at anyone, and always making sure it was in the locked position. We learned about self-defense, checking under the car before getting in, being aware of those around us. We were taught the *how* about the various door locks, alarm systems, cameras, and many other things that helped protect us.

Just as the love for our family motivates us to protect them in as many ways as possible, our love for God should motivate us to protect His ministry, using the resources He has given us. This issue is full of ideas you can use for that very purpose. From protecting people in your organization from harmful chemicals to protecting its finances and staff, this issue provides you with processes that can help keep your ministry safe.

Don't miss our featured article from Dr. Everett Piper on page 14. Dr. Piper shares how our job is to protect the ministry of the church and defend the integrity of the gospel. Learn how they are doing this at Oklahoma Wesleyan University. Check out your two new vendors on pages 38 and 40. One can help protect your assets and the other can provide food for your ministry. You will also find a recap of the 2018 Texas Ministry Conference where 1,094 people gathered to learn, network and fellowship.

Grab that cup of coffee or your favorite drink, put your feet up and enjoy the 50th issue of CO+OP magazine!

Together We Protect!

Patti Malott
Executive Director



Connecting People and Resources

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Mission

The CO+OP connects churches, schools and nonprofit organizations with reputable vendors and resources to save time and money on products, services and education.

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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**.



Texas Ministry ConferenceSM

www.TexasMinistryConference.org

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

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

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

Learn more about how you can benefit from attending this conference at www.TexasMinistryConference.org or calling **832.478.5131**.

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morepowertoyou

By Michael Bernstein

Summer Electricity Rates Are Forecast to Skyrocket!

All of our customers and prospects for churches, schools, missions and universities have one thing in common: good stewardship! After all, it is a blessing to be able to offer the congregants the lowest costs for electricity for their campus, large or small.

A number of our electric providers have alerted us that electricity rates are expected to hit historically high levels quite soon! Reasons for this expected higher rate:

1. Three aging power plants in Texas are going offline this summer, causing uncertainty about the summer supply. In the current market, we may need to put a short-term contract in place at a higher price until we arrive at a dip in prices. At that time we will lock in a long-term rate that is favorable for your facility.
2. We may see a gradual increase in demand due to an overall increase in business expansion and manufacturing activity in Texas and the U.S., which will have an effect of raising energy costs.

Capture Current “Market Rates” – Before They Rise – even if your church, school, or other non-profit’s electricity contract doesn’t expire for years!

In 2017 we successfully captured a low renewal energy rate for a number of our aggregation customers who had contracts expiring in 2021. We were able to capture a “Below Current Market Rate” from 2021 to 2023.

Will you **WAIT** to price your next contract, or will you **ASK NOW** for a “No Cost” Energy Analysis to capture rates before they rise?

If you wait to shop for electricity until your contract is expiring, you may have missed your opportunity to bring a low rate to your congregants or members.

When the providers receive a pricing request for a group or for individual churches, they begin negotiations at a lower rate. They know the history and power of the vast number of kilowatt-hours that TES has contracted

with these non-profits. The advantage of the group-aggregated rates allows churches in deregulated areas to realize the same advantage as the larger churches.

Due to our deep relationships with the retail electric providers, we occasionally receive notice of a special buy to offer.

DON'T WAIT!

Let us assist you with a no-cost electricity analysis of your current contract, even if it doesn't come out for years.

Call TES at our toll-free number, (866) 948-5720 or (972) 447-0447 ext. 103, to discuss your energy needs and review your current contract status. We will offer you a no-cost analysis during that call.

We look forward to speaking with you about your energy needs, both now and in the future. TES welcomes you to contact us about your future energy needs.

Please check our ad on the inside cover of this magazine.

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Michael Bernstein



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Phone: 214.924.7355
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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.



we've got you covered

by Gary Benson and Paula Burns

Protecting His Ministry: An Insurance Perspective

So many thoughts come to mind with the words "Protecting His Ministry." On the insurance side of things, we discuss them often. Indeed the topics are numerous, but who would have thought those words today would most likely resonate around church security and the threat of violence within our church walls?

Still fresh in our minds is the 2017 shootings at First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, which has led to many church leaders asking what steps they should implement to protect their congregations. That's a fair question, but we also need to understand that most churches in America are safe places, and while acts of shootings on church property are shocking, they are rare.

That said, as with any good risk management program, our task is to minimize a risk, knowing that we cannot completely prevent one, and the same holds true for acts of violence. Let's review four possible options church leaders might consider as part of their safety programs.

1. Utilizing Off-Duty Officers. Of all options, this is the best deterrent to the threat of an armed assailant on church property – or for that matter in other tenuous situations. Ideally, have two or more off-duty law enforcement officers on site during services, with a police car parked in a highly visible location outside the church. The mere presence of their uniform and vehicle is a deterrent. Of course, there is a cost associated with using off-duty officers to provide security, but the costs feel more manageable when you consider that you'd only be using them for a few hours each Sunday. Consider also the reduced liability exposure by utilizing off-duty officers because if they have to respond to an emergency crisis, it's their liability that kicks in, not the church's.

2. Utilizing Technology. Modern security conveniences are so commonplace that we have a tendency to overlook some of the easier-to-use solutions churches can consider with nominal expenditures. Have a reputable alarm carrier evaluate your needs and consider utilizing items like surveillance cameras, entry control devices and panic buttons. For larger and even some mid-sized churches, the use of walkie-talkies or ear buds among parking lot attendants, greeters, or those assigned to patrol the grounds is an ideal way to communicate. Not only useful for effective church organization on a busy Sunday, but also essential in the event of a crisis.

3. Responding To a Crisis. While our first thoughts might go to having an active shooter on the premises, it's important that we have a well-thought-out plan to respond in the event of *any* type of emergency. For example, in anticipation of a medical emergency, form a team of well-qualified individuals who can best respond to that type of event. Or in the case of some form of family disturbance or other tense situations, know in advance how you would respond. Having uniformed police officers to handle these types of events is another ideal reason for having their presence. In the case of an active shooter or even word of a nearby shooter, know who should respond in such a situation, and how.

4. Forming a Church Security Team. Okay, this is the proverbial elephant in the room, so let's address it. Should we have a church security team? Are we allowed to have a church security team? The Texas state law put into effect last September made it legal for houses of worship to have armed volunteer security. The problem here is the wide range of competency among permit holders in handling a firearm, and of course the associated training that would be needed to deal with an active shooter. Even the best

marksman is most likely not trained to meet the demands of such a situation, but church security teams do not always have to be armed. They can serve a valuable purpose in communication and coordinated responses. Armed security teams, in our opinion, are among the last options a church should consider forming. If they do, individuals with a law enforcement background and ongoing training options are then preferred. Even so, the church needs to take into consideration that it is placing a tremendous amount of responsibility on these individuals. There is also the potential for civil litigation to be directed against armed individuals who might injure or take innocent lives while discharging their weapons. There is more involved than a volunteer spirit. Most "church insurance policies" probably do not have an armed guard exclusion, but you need to check with your insurance carrier/agent to be sure.

Gary Benson and Paula Burns



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The Insurance One team assembled to service the CO+OP members is led by agents with close to 100 years of combined experience. The Woodlands (Texas) office is led by agency owners, Gary Benson and Paula Burns.

Prevention, preparedness and training for all types of crisis situations in churches are effective tools towards protecting your ministry. The best prevention measures to be agreed upon will take time to apply and will be an ongoing process, but your efforts will undoubtedly reduce your risks in these areas. ✦

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Kim Whaley has assisted CO+OP members and vendors for six years. In her role as an agent and a Registered Health Underwriter, she focuses on understanding ACA regulations and what is required for an employer to be compliant. Whether you have 2 employees or 200, Kim will work hard to design a benefits program to meet your budget and your employee's needs.

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SEVEN STANDARDS TO HELP WITH RISK MANAGEMENT

by Vonna Laue

The Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) began in the late 1970s to provide a measure of integrity and accountability among Christian ministries and churches. Nearly 40 years have passed and the need to provide an environment of trust and transparency is as great as, or greater, than it was at that time.



The three primary areas of focus for ECFA relate to board governance, gift administration, and finance. As the focus of this magazine issue is on Protecting His Ministry, it is worth noting that these same topics are critical to the idea of protecting our churches. If there is a breakdown in any of those three areas, the church will be at risk both financially and reputationally.

ECFA developed seven standards related to these three core subjects. What follows is a discussion on how your church could adhere to these standards and provide a greater level of protection for your ministry.

1 – DOCTRINAL ISSUES

Doctrine is an important cornerstone of every church. Having a written statement of faith will allow those interested in your church to clearly understand what your church believes to be true and “non-negotiable.” Understand that not everyone will agree with the positions taken, but it is better to be clear than to allow for misunderstandings and potential dissension later.

2 – BOARD GOVERNANCE

An effective board can mitigate a significant amount of risk. This statement causes one to ask, “What is effective?” Your denomination or affiliation may dictate your church’s system of board governance, but here are some general characteristics that may be helpful in enhancing an environment of accountability with the board:

- Board size should include at least five members. A smaller board doesn’t allow for enough diversity of ideas, knowledge, and opinions. While there is no specific cap on board size, it should be limited to a number that allows for structure and organization while providing the time and environment for any board member to be heard on an issue.
- It is important that a majority of board members be independent. Independence is impaired when someone is on staff, reports to a leader, is a family member of a staff person by blood or marriage, receives compensation from or has a business relationship with the church.

- The board should function at a high level by setting direction and assuring adherence to board policies. The board should not be a “doing” board where the board as a whole, or individual members acting in their board capacity, are involved in day-to-day operational activities. It can be difficult, especially in smaller churches, to separate volunteer activities from governance activities, but it must be done for the board to function in a healthy manner.

3 – FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT

Nearly every risk you can think of could ultimately have an outcome that impacts the finances of the church. The financial statements not only allow leadership to gauge the financial health of the church, but they also allow members of the congregation to understand the financial operations.

It can be extremely valuable to engage an independent CPA. This may include a compilation, review, or audit—with the specific nature of the engagement depending on the church’s size and needs. The CPA may also perform some consulting services such as reviewing the church’s internal control structure or assisting with financial reporting models and the chart of accounts. It is possible to have an internal audit function that provides some level of oversight. If the church chooses this option, the individuals performing the internal audit procedures should have a solid understanding of the financial operations of a church, the relevant internal audit steps, and what results need to be reported and addressed by management.

4 – USE OF RESOURCES AND COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS

Some church leaders have taken the position that because the church is a tax-exempt organization and not subject to an annual tax filing with the IRS, there are virtually no laws or regulations that are applicable to the church. This is certainly NOT true. In some ways, the responsibility is even greater because the church is able to provide a tax benefit to donors. Here are some examples of requirements that apply to churches as nonprofit organizations:

- Donations received and receipted must be controlled by the church and not by the donor.

- Assets of the church cannot be used to benefit a private individual or a for-profit entity.
- Funds sent overseas for purposes such as missions must meet specific criteria set by the U.S. government.
- Personnel laws are also applicable, such as paying overtime and properly classifying individuals as employees or independent contractors.
- Certain tax forms are required to be filed such as W-2s, 1099s, and possibly even a Form 990-T with a tax payment if the church is involved in any unrelated business income activities.

5 – TRANSPARENCY

Providing the proper level of transparency related to financial and operational matters will allow those in the congregation to have a higher sense of trust in the leaders. The question then becomes what is the proper level of transparency? Obviously, making every piece of financial information available would not be prudent, and neither would complete secrecy and silence. Each congregation needs to find the proper balance for their church and then to communicate clearly what information is available and how the information can be obtained.

6 – COMPENSATION-SETTING AND RELATED-PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Compensation of the senior pastor (or equivalent top church leader) is an important task. Setting compensation too low may result in not being able to find a pastor or requiring the pastor to work an additional job. A church may choose to have a bi-vocational pastor, but it must set their expectations accordingly. Setting compensation at a level that is too high could result in penalties by the IRS for excess benefits or might cause discord in the congregation if it is significantly out of line with what others in the community may be paid. The senior pastor's compensation should be set by the independent board using comparability information to avoid either of these risks.

Related-party transactions should also be monitored carefully to make sure the church is not conducting business in a manner that results in someone receiving a personal benefit. Adopting a conflicts-of-interest policy can help by requiring:

- All parties with a conflict-of-interest be excused from discussions and voting related to the transaction.

- Competitive bids be obtained.
- The board confirm the transaction is in the best interest of the church.
- The decision be documented in the board minutes.
- Board members and ministry leaders complete annual conflicts-of-interest questionnaires which are reviewed for possible conflicts.

7 – STEWARDSHIP OF CHARITABLE GIFTS

Donations made to the church must be handled with the utmost care. This is a primary focus of stewardship. The church must accurately reflect the financial needs and then faithfully administer gifts that are received, including honoring restrictions placed on those gifts. Be careful to include the appropriate wording on all gift acknowledgements, as there have been many cases of gifts that were ultimately found not to be tax-deductible during an IRS audit due to lack of proper substantiation. Finally, consider the use of a gift acceptance policy to reflect what types of gifts the church will receive (specifically noncash items) and for what projects or designations the church will receive gifts (what types of restrictions will be honored).

Identifying and managing risks doesn't need to be a daunting task, but it does require intentionality. As you consider the risks for your congregation, determine if each of the previous items has been addressed or if there is additional work necessary. The best thing you can do is prioritize what needs to be done and then get started. Each item you address will put you one step closer to Protecting His Ministry.

For free help and resources on risk management and other vital areas of church administration, visit ChurchEXCEL.org by ECFA. ✦

Vonna Laue



Vonna serves as an Executive Vice President at ECFA. Before coming to ECFA, Vonna spent 20 years, most recently as a managing partner, with a national public accounting firm specializing in service to Christian ministries in the areas of audit and consulting. There she served in organizational leadership as well as providing services to meet clients' various needs.



Confronting Absurdity While Protecting **Truth**

by Everett Piper

Trigger Warning! What you are about to read may alarm, disturb or offend you:

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

If you read that quintessential love passage from 1 Corinthians and failed to see a problem, you're not alone. I share your confusion. This story harkens back to Thanksgiving week 2015. I was going about my daily business as President of Oklahoma Wesleyan University (OKWU) when one of my vice presidents called me: "Dr. Piper, I wanted to give you a heads-up. One of our students confronted me after I spoke in the chapel service this morning. He told me I should have had a trigger warning prior to my sermon because it offended him and made him feel uncomfortable. He claimed I 'singled him out' and, likewise, his peers. They felt unsafe by my egregious micro-aggression. What I said in my homily 'victimized' him."

Bewildered, I asked to review the text of my vice president's sermon, knowing that he always spoke from prepared notes and seldom ventured from them. "By the way," I asked, "what was the topic of your talk?" His response blew me away: "It was a sermon from 1 Corinthians 13—on love!"

Having worked in academia my entire career, very little that happens on college campuses surprises me. But I was simply amazed that I was being confronted with this absurdity at a private, conservative Christian university that still boldly and unapologetically celebrates an educational paradigm solidly grounded in a biblical worldview. No one visiting our campus could miss our distinctly Christian mission and message. We proudly boast of the primacy of Christ, the priority of Scripture, the pursuit of truth, and the practice of wisdom. Our university motto reads, "Impacting Culture with the Lordship of Jesus Christ." We require chapel attendance twice a week and hold our students

accountable to honor traditional morality and live lives of integrity and personal chastity. We boldly state who we are to every prospective student and parent and are crystal clear about what is expected of all members of our community.

Nevertheless, we had a student complaining that a sermon on love made him feel uncomfortable for being unloving! I responded with an open letter posted on our university website. Here is part of what it said:

Young man, that feeling of discomfort you have after listening to a sermon is called a conscience. An altar call is supposed to make you feel bad. It is supposed to make you feel guilty. The goal of many a good sermon is to get you to confess your sins—not coddle you in your selfishness. The primary objective of the Church and the Christian faith is your confession, not your self-actualization.

So, here's my advice: If you want the chaplain to tell you you're a victim rather than tell you that you need virtue, this may not be the university you're looking for. If you want to complain about a sermon that makes you feel less than loving for not showing love, this might be the wrong place.

If you're more interested in playing the "hater" card than you are in confessing your own hate; if you want to arrogantly lecture, rather than humbly learn; if you don't want to feel guilt in your soul when you are guilty of sin; if you want to be enabled rather than confronted, there are many universities across the land (in Missouri and elsewhere) that will give you exactly what you want, but Oklahoma Wesleyan isn't one of them.

At OKWU, we teach you to be selfless rather than self-centered. We are more interested in you practicing personal forgiveness than political revenge. We want you to model interpersonal reconciliation rather than foment personal conflict. We believe the content of your character is more important than the color of your skin. We don't believe that you have been victimized every time you feel guilty and we don't issue "trigger warnings" before altar calls.

Oklahoma Wesleyan is not a "safe place," but rather, a place to learn: to learn that life isn't about you, but about others; that the bad feeling you have while listening to a sermon is called guilt; that the way to address it is to repent of everything that's wrong with you rather than blame others for everything that's wrong with them. This is a place where you will quickly learn that you need to grow up.

This is not a day care. This is a university.

A week later, the post had gone viral, shared by millions of people around the world. It became known as the "This is Not a Day Care" post and was featured on The O'Reilly Factor, The Kelly File, FOX and Friends, Varney and Company, NBC Today, and dozens of other local and regional news outlets. *The American Spectator*, *The Federalist*, *The Washington Post*, and *The New York Times* all covered the story. The Drudge Report, blogger Rod Dreher, and syndicated radio host Dr. Drew picked it up. Rush Limbaugh and Glenn Beck praised the story. My willingness to state what seemed to me to be obvious had started a bit of a wildfire among people frustrated by the "snowflake rebellion" on college campuses across America and around the world. My phone rang off the hook as emails and letters poured in from parents, frustrated at paying tens of thousands of dollars to have their children brainwashed and bullied, saying, "Thank you! It's about time someone said it!"

I wrote that post a little over two years ago, but the snowflake rebellion hasn't lessened. If anything, it has devolved into a blizzard of self-absorbed insanity. Micro aggressions, trigger warnings, and demands for "safe spaces" continue to dominate campus news from coast to coast.

At American University, the University of Wyoming, and UC San Diego, students receive coloring books to help alleviate stress and cope with anxiety. Not to be outdone, Brown University created a "safe space" for students that included "cookies, coloring books, bubbles, Play-Doh, calming music, pillows, blankets, and a video of puppies." And Southern Illinois University just announced its brilliant plan to host coordinated campus "naps" where its students can snuggle up together in sleeping bags at the university's library and "dream of diversity" as they seek to solve the nation's ills.

Meanwhile learned leaders of campuses across the country have forsaken science as well, insisting there is no biological or physiological distinction between males and females. As the result, nothing less than total "gender" chaos has ensued. Scientific facts have been flushed down the toilet, as college bathrooms have become laboratories for social experimentation and university classrooms have become platforms for ideological indoctrination and, as the result, women suffer the loss of their facilities, their sports, their privacy and their very identity.

No longer are college campuses bulwarks of free thought and speech – in fact, they haven't been for a long time. The same Woodstock-attending flower children of the 1960s who called for love and understanding – and then stormed campus offices and indulged in sit-ins and riots – now teach students to silence mostly conservative dissenters through disruptive violence.

The stories seem endless. Millennials feel uncomfortable. They demand to be coddled. And spineless college administrators and their shamelessly complicit faculty readily comply.

It may be tempting to dismiss what's happening on university campuses as disconnected from the "real world" where most people live. But what happens in the classroom doesn't stay on the campus. Whether it is the bullying dismissal of other points of view or the gender nonsense that has become ideological orthodoxy on college campuses, we should expect to see more of it on Main Street.

Today's law students are tomorrow's lawyers and judges. Today's business students are tomorrow's business leaders. The students who want to ban Plato, Aristotle, Voltaire, and Kant from college curricula will soon be sitting on school

It may be tempting to dismiss what's happening on university campuses as disconnected from the "real world" where most people live. But what happens in the classroom doesn't stay on the campus.

boards or serving in academia. The students who believe in shutting down unpopular and often conservative points of view will soon be leading our state legislatures. What is taught in the classroom today will be practiced in the real world tomorrow.

But aside from such absurdities (or perhaps because of them) these are some of the most exciting times in the history of the Church! For the biblically faithful, "such a time as this" brings with it a crystal clear and clarion call. Our job is to protect the ministry of His Church. Our purpose is to defend the integrity of His Gospel. Our passion is to preach and teach His Truth. May God give us confidence as we fight the good fight for Christ and His kingdom. May He give us courage to run into the face of the storm rather than away from it. ✚

Everett Piper



In his 15 years as president of Oklahoma Wesleyan University, Dr. Everett Piper has become known for his defense of intellectual freedom. He is passionate about providing education that models a way of thought, life, and faith, in a critically engaged community honoring the primacy of Christ, the priority of Scripture, the Pursuit of Truth, and the Practice of Wisdom.

Dr. Piper is the author of *Why I Am a Liberal, and Other Conservative Ideas* and the viral op-ed, "This is Not a Daycare, It's a University." His newest book on safe spaces and trigger warnings is the best-selling *Not a Daycare: The Devastating Consequences of Abandoning Truth*.



*The above is taken from the introduction to Dr. Piper's new book, *Not a Day Care: The Devastating Consequences of Abandoning Truth*, available at NotADayCare.com, Amazon.com, or other fine bookstores.



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Texas Ministry ConferenceSM

2018 Recap

Networking Together
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Visiting CO+OP Alley Together



Shelby Systems has been involved with the CO+OP for many years, along with the Texas Ministry ConferenceSM since it started. Being a one-day event with over 1,000 attendees, we see tremendous value as both an exhibitor and a sponsor. It provides an excellent way for us to update our existing customers who attend plus the opportunity to meet potential new customers who are inquiring about our Church Management & Financial Software solutions. Congrats to the CO+OP for their 30 years of service and dedication as they help to further God's Kingdom. Also, much thanks to Patti Malott, a longtime friend of Shelby, for her ongoing support and excellent leadership skills.

Blessings,
Russell McDaniel
General Manager of Shelby Systems

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Lisa Stetler, Salem Lutheran Church

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Nikki Baker, Spring Baptist Church





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Lorrie Castle, St. Philip Presbyterian Church

Every year we attend, we leave with so many amazing thoughts and ideas that have improved our church operation.

Jean Carlen, Life Church





Just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed and appreciated the conference last Thursday. I came back to my office on Friday and told the whole staff about it. I hope we can all come next year. I had no idea of the scope of this thing. It is truly wonderful!

My favorite session was with Stephanie Chase about dealing with difficult parents. It was highly entertaining, engaging, practical and inspirational. Mark Lanier as keynote speaker after lunch was the best!

Thank you so much to all of you behind the scenes who planned and executed this marvelous event.

Blessings,
Esme Sheasby, Children's Minister
West Houston Church of Christ



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Janice Stump, Faithbridge Church

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Congratulations to our Promotional Door Prize Winners

Name	Promotion	Prize	Sponsor
Ana Robles - Texas Annual Conference of the UMC - Houston TX	IT Sponsor/Vendor Game	Hundred Dollar Bill	BEMA
Corrine Johnson - The Harbor - Friendswood TX	Hashtag/Best Tweet of the Day	\$100 iTunes Gift Card	Chamberlin Roofing & Waterproofing
David Droll - Hope Beyond Bridges - Spring TX	IT Sponsor/Vendor Game	Hundred Dollar Bill	BEMA
Dianne Rheams - First Baptist Church - Clute TX	Early Bird Drawing	\$100 Amazon Gift Card	Cox & Associates CPAs
Kay Silence - Cy-Fair Christian Church - Houston TX	First 100 Registered Drawing	\$100 MasterCard Gift Card	Dynasty Sound
Chuck Kneyse - Church Administrative Professionals - Blue Springs MO	Person Traveling the Farthest	Christian Life Trilogy Campaign Kit	Bible Study Media
		\$100 Amazon Gift Card	CO+OP
Lisa Stetler - Salem Lutheran Church - Tomball TX	Person Bringing the Most 1st Timers	(2) \$50 Restaurant Gift Cards	Truett Seminary
		Crystal Cube and Chocolate Shoe	CO+OP
Sandra Avila - Family Christian Academy - Houston TX	Overall Conference Evaluations	(2) \$100 Amazon Gift Cards	Bank of the West
United Regional Health Care System - Wichita Falls TX	Organizations here for the 1st Time	Water Fountain	Grass Roots
Salem Lutheran Church - Tomball TX	Church with the Most Attendees	(3) \$100 Visa Gift Cards	Sommerville & Associates
		\$2500 Advertising Certificate, Focus on the Family Series, Charles Stanley books	Salem Media (KKHT)

Congratulations to our 2018 TMC Door Prize Winners

Winner	Church/Organization	Door Prize	Given By
Adam Dunlap	Houston's First Baptist Church - Houston TX	Air Fryer	AcctTwo
Adam Porter	First Baptist Church - McKinney TX	9.7" iPad (32GB, WiFi only, Space Gray)	Shelby Systems
Barry Firestone	The Woodlands First Baptist Church - The Woodlands TX	\$100 Gift Certificate for Lunch w/Stoller Foundation	Stoller Foundation
Becky Vance	Atascocita Community Church - Humble TX	\$100 Pappas Gift Card	American Business Machines
Bob Hatcher	Spring Baptist Church - Spring TX	Baseball autographed by Astros 3B Alex Bregman	Daikin Applied
Candice Elliott	The Fort Bend Church - Sugar Land TX	\$100 Amazon Gift Card, <i>Church Buildings</i> , by Katie Burch, Koozies	PlanNorth Architectural Company
Charles Harlow	Conroe Church of Christ - Conroe TX	(2) \$50 Shell Gas Gift Cards	The Zenith
Cheryl Reyes	Trinity Baptist Church - San Antonio TX	\$100 Amazon Gift Card, \$100 Visa Gift Card, & 6 Tickets to Rodeo (Brad Paisley Concert)	Core Benefits
Christine Morgan	Dayspring Church - Porter TX	Amazon Echo	Sommerville and Associates
Cindy Houlihan	Pines Presbyterian Church - Houston TX	Megaphone w/Speaker	Texas 2-Way
Daryl Parker	Covenant Community Church - San Antonio TX	Edible Gift Basket	The Seed Company
David Droll	Hope Beyond Bridges - Spring TX	Keurig Brewer	Daiohs First Choice Coffee Services
David Swan	Cypress Christian School - Houston TX	NEST Camera	Gulf Coast Security Services
David Thomas	St Luke's Episcopal Church - San Antonio TX	\$200 Office Depot Gift Card	Ann E. Williams
Dawn Collins	Covenant Community Church - San Antonio TX	\$100 Visa Gift Card	Frost Bank
Dennis Turnipseed	Eyes on Me Inc - Houston TX	Arctic Zip-up Cooler	Sherwin Williams
Dick Bogner	North Belt Baptist Church - Spring TX	Television	HH Architecture
Elizabeth Henson	Chapelwood UMC - Houston TX	Amazon Echo	TES Energy Services
Elizabeth Pilcher	Faith Lutheran Church - Sugar Land TX	\$100 Amazon Gift Card	ECFA
Evelyn Ogletree	First Metropolitan Church - Houston TX	(6) \$50 Mayanah Gift Cards for coaching	Mayanah Financial Coaching
Jason Mayfield	Spring Baptist Church - Spring TX	10 Hour Charter w/driver	Roadrunner Charters
Jennifer Hill	Christ the King Lutheran Church - Kingwood TX	\$100 Amazon Gift Card	TouchPoint Software
Jenny Wong	The Church of St John the Divine - Houston TX	\$100 Amazon Gift Card	mobileAxept
John Hopkins	Living Word Lutheran Church - Katy TX	\$100 Pappas Gift Card	Harper and Pearson Company
Jordan Ogletree	First Metropolitan Church - Houston TX	Apple TV	The Church App by Subplash
Jori Kennedy	Christ United Methodist Church - College Station TX	\$100 Starbucks Gift Card	Blackmon Mooring
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Karen Ho	Houston Chinese Church - Houston TX	(2) \$100 Pappas Gift Cards	Health Insurance Solutions

Winner	Church/Organization	Door Prize	Given By
Leo Loughmiller	Spring Baptist Church - Spring TX	(2) Tickets to Houston Rockets vs Minnesota Timberwolves (2/23)	CFAC Mechanical
Linda Burnett	First Metropolitan Church - Houston TX	\$100 Office Depot Gift Card	Kirksey Architecture
Linda LeCroy	Faithbridge Church - Spring TX	\$200 Gift Certificate to Church Interiors	Church Interiors
Lisa Sanchez	Family Christian Academy - Houston TX	2 tickets to Houston Rockets vs Pheonix Suns (3/30)	National Signs
Lorrie Castle	St Philip Presbyterian Church - Houston TX	\$100 American Express Card	Care Providers Insurance Services
Mel Perry	New Life Temple Church - Houston TX	\$100 Gift Certificate for Lunch w/Stoller Foundation	Stoller Foundation
Michaelea Fuentes	Boys and Girls Country of Houston - Houston TX	\$100 Office Depot Gift Card	Parkhill, Smith & Cooper
Myrna Arana	Champion Forest Baptist Church - Conroe TX	\$25 (each) Gift Cards: Applebees, Chilis, IHOP, Outback	Integrity Furniture and Equipment
Nancy Jahns	Brenham's First Baptist Church - Brenham TX	\$25 Lowes Gift Card, 6 mos free membership to Church Facility Mgmt Solutions, 4 mugs	Cool Solutions Group
Patricia Collins	Kingsland Baptist Church - Katy TX	Dyson V8 Absolute Vacuum Cleaner	Ridley's Vacuum & Janitorial Supplies
Paula Batiste	South Park Baptist Church - Houston TX	Gift Basket	Insurance One Agency
Pauline Nabb	RED VEST VOLUNTEER	Handmade box by John Malott	CO+OP
Rev Joseph Kost	Immanuel Evangelical Church - Needville TX	(2) \$50 Gift Cards to Office Depot	Office Depot
Robin Strayer	Salem Lutheran Church - Tomball TX	(2) 6 Piece Knife Sets, Deluxe Cheese Board, Cutting Board w/knife	Sysco Foods
Ron Hawkins	Windwood Presbyterian Church - Houston TX	(2) \$50 Visa Gift Cards	Ambassador Services
Rose Poole	Kinsmen Lutheran Church - Houston TX	\$100 Gift Card	Total Recreation Products (TRP)
Susan Brown	KSBJ - Humble TX	\$100 Amazon Gift Card	Shield Bearer
Suzanne Boase Honeycutt	KSBJ - Humble TX	\$100 Amazon Gift Card	Ratliff and Associates
Suzy Johnson	KSBJ - Humble TX	Amazon Echo	Sunfire Protection & Alarm Systems
Tamara Burke	Christ the King Lutheran Church - Kingwood TX	\$100 Amazon Gift Card	Professional Janitorial Services
Tommy Rosson	Houston Responds - Houston TX	5th Generation iPad 9.7" (128GB, Wifi only, Space Gray)	MBS, Inc.
Trista Jones	Faith Lutheran Church - Sugar Land TX	(2) \$25 Gift Cards & (1) \$50 Gift Card	Imperial Utilities & Sustainability
Troy Sikes	Brenham's First Baptist Church - Brenham TX	Drawstring Bag with waterbottle, Journal, Pens and \$75 Visa Gift Card	ACS Technology
Vickie Summers	Crossroads Fellowship - Houston TX	Orrefors Crystal Bowl (\$250 Value)	NW Digital Works

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From the Word to Life

Patti Malott--*Personal*
Conference Director, Texas Ministry Conference
9950 Cypresswood Drive, Suite 250
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March 12, 2018

Dear Patti—

I'm writing to thank you for the invitation you and your team extended to me to speak at your Texas Ministry Conference. What an exceptional job you and your staff did putting this all together.

I was amazed at how well organized everything was—and the classy feel it all had. Registration was a snap...and fresh fruit for break time? Wow! Our room was prepped and ready to go (though we got a little extra help from your on-site tech people to work out an audio challenge).

The barbecue lunch was just plain delicious (before flying home to Chicago, I had to stop at Spring Creek Barbecue for one final treat). I could not believe all the very generous give away prizes and drawings, either.

I have been blessed to attend many similar events, but the Texas Ministry Conference has got to be at the top. I went home and bragged to a Moody Radio colleague in Chicago about all that you guys put together. But as a native Texan, he was not the least surprised!

Thank you for creating such a wonderful learning experience, Patti!

Gratefully,

Jon Gauger
Moody Radio Host
Author, *If I Could Do it All Over Again*



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CHURCH SECURITY: WHAT IS IT?

by Jim Napolitano

After a great and exciting career with the U.S. Secret Service – working major investigations, working protection details for President William Jefferson Clinton and Former President George H.W. Bush, providing training for agents as a Program Manager and Senior Instructor, opening the Waco Resident Office for President George W. Bush, and more – I ended my career in Houston, Texas in 2008, retiring after 22 years 3 months and 2 days (but who's counting).

After retiring, I entered the private sector as a Security Representative for a major oil company and started Universal Safety & Security Solutions, a security firm located in the Houston area.

Since entering the security business, I have seen a lot of misrepresentation from people claiming that they are security experts, yet having few to no credentials to show for it. Some people even say they once protected the President of the United States, only to reveal that they stood on a street corner working as law enforcement when a visiting President drove past in a motorcade. I say all of this to get to my point: the very first thing you need to know when considering hiring security is knowing who your expert is and how much experience they have in security. An expert is someone who accomplishes a task over and over again with success.

So, in 2011 a major Houston area church sought out our company, Universal Safety & Security Solutions, asking us as experts to review and assist with their church's security. After arriving at this church and having a very productive meeting with the Executive Pastor, I was asked to observe the next Sunday service and make some recommendations. The funny part of the meeting was being asked by some of the volunteers at the main entrance desk, "WHY WOULD A CHURCH NEED SECURITY?" I explained to them that the church advertises their service times to the world. These services are attended by large numbers of adults gathered in a small confined area. These adults bring their children and place them with the church in the expectation that the church will secure them. With people gathering in this relatively small area, an evil person wishing to do harm to the children, adults, church employees and/or the person or persons on stage, at the altar or in a classroom would find it easy to execute his or her plan without any security present.

From my experience in securing the President of the United States, I find that some of the security issues are easy to overcome. Pastors in some respect are like any politicians – they deliver their messages in front of large groups having a friendly base and sometimes a group of people that aren't so friendly, depending on the message. The message is delivered at a publicized time, date and location, making it easy for the evil-doer to find an open opportunity to inflict harm or disruption.

What can churches do to strengthen their security and protect their congregations?

ACCESS CONTROL – Access control at a presidential event is simple compared to a church. Why is that? At a presidential event, the Secret Service limits the number of entrances and exits and screens the audience with magnetometers and more. This is impossible for churches to do on Sunday mornings while trying to welcome as many people as possible to their church for worship. Churches want to be as open and welcoming as possible to all people across the spectrum. Magnetometers most certainly would deter that! Churches still need to have some form of access control, however. Access control can be as simple as locking certain exterior doors in order to funnel people through entrances that have greeters handing out the weekly programs who can observe and report any suspicious individuals. Access control also includes electronic devices for employees to use for areas throughout the church complex.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR VULNERABILITIES – Having a reputable security company come to your church and conduct a security vulnerability assessment is paramount to mitigating your risks. An assessment will give you a clear picture of your normal operation, both during the week and on the weekends, and of what your vulnerabilities may be. The assessment should include possible solutions to addressing the vulnerabilities.

UNDERSTANDING THE THREAT – Your security expert should also give you a threat analysis of the church and methods on how to deal with potential threats. Simply think about what motivates people to come to church. Most people go to church for the message and to understand life through their faith. Some come to find the answers to life's problems, such as why do all bad things happen to them and who is to blame. Others completely disagree with your church's teaching, want to let you know your way is wrong and to lead you to their way of thinking. Lastly, people's lives may be in complete crisis, and you should have a solution!

CHURCH SECURITY TEAM – This is a complicated issue. The best way to form a security team is to hire a licensed security expert and have them assemble a team of trained armed licensed security guards that follow a set of post orders designed by the security expert with an eye to how the church should be secured. Some churches with small or no budgets for security use security volunteers that are not trained in Use of Force (and may or may not have knowledge of Chapter 9 of the Texas State Penal Code). The use of non-trained volunteers could become a liability issue. The hiring of off-duty police officers is expensive, and issues with the officers occur if you do not specify what you need them to cover. If the church creates traffic issues because of their large attendance, only a Peace Officer can direct traffic (in Texas), so you should brief these Officers on what to do in case of an incident.

SECURITY DIRECTOR – With most of the churches for whom I have provided consultation, the point of contact has been the Executive Pastor, who then passes me off to the Maintenance Supervisor. Security is always secondary. The church should hire a Security Director who understands the concerns and issues at the church, including the Pastor's schedule and questionable emails, calls or social media posts made to or about the Pastor.

EXECUTIVE PROTECTION AT THE CHURCH – When the Pastor has a large footprint (he or she broadcasts on television or online, reaching out to areas around the world), the church should consider investing in Executive Protection for the Pastor. Missionary work also brings attention to the Pastor. If the pastor starts to receive threats or even unusual attention from people, it may be time for a Security Vulnerability Assessment (SVA) at the Pastor's home with possible security there. Having a trained expert in executive protection is the way to go.

ELECTRONIC SECURITY EQUIPMENT – Cameras, alarms and sensors are great tools and can give you warning before something unwanted or dangerous takes place in the church. But the church has to have someone monitoring these tools to alert the security team that they have an issue coming their way.

COMMUNICATION – This brings us to closed circuit shortwave radio systems. A true security expert knows the value of a GOOD communications system. It will increase the ability of your security team to respond appropriately to issues.

TRAINING – Doing table-top exercise scenario training is important, and simply talking through different issues with your staff will decrease their response time and increase their ability to have a correct response to issues that may arise.

So in the end, hiring a vetted security expert will serve your church and your members well, giving them some peace of mind. Remember, all will seem well until evil comes to call. ✚

Jim Napolitano



With more than 30 years of combined law enforcement and private security experience, James Napolitano is a trusted professional in the security industry providing expertise to individuals and organizations of all sizes. He is currently the Chief of Police for the City of Montgomery, Texas, and the owner and President of Universal Safety & Security Solutions, LLC, a security firm located in

Conroe, Texas. Mr. Napolitano has taught about church security at the Texas Ministry ConferenceSM, and can be reached at (281) 475-9343, or jnapolitano@ussinc.com.

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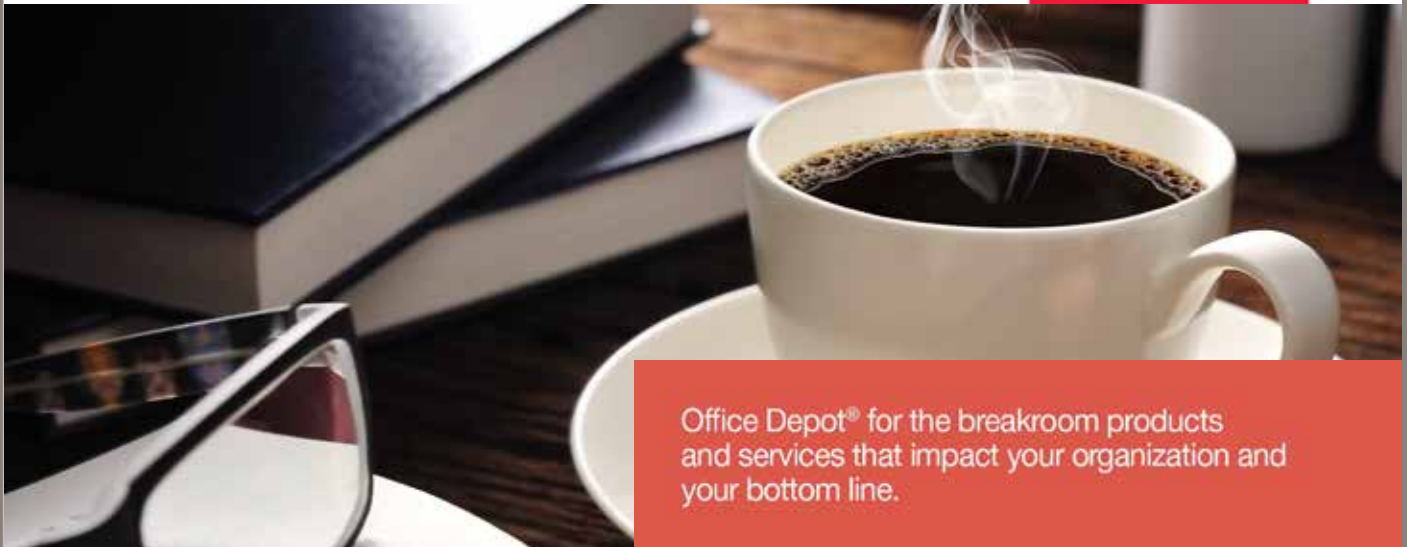
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cleansweep

by Vanessa Cordell

Safe Chemicals

Before Guy and I took over Ridley's Vacuum and Janitorial Supply in 2012, we began to think and pray about the vision for our company. What would the company look like under our leadership: what service and products would we offer, what would be the atmosphere of the store, etc. At that time I was pregnant with our first child, and like many first-time moms, I was in the process of researching everything baby-related. I had a book that detailed and rated every baby product on the market, with reviews, safety ratings, value and need. Then it ranked each item from best to worst in each category. I pored over this book, I read all the details, I wanted my baby to have the best safety-rated car seat, stroller, highchair, everything. I put post-it notes on the important pages: I was really serious about baby safety. On my hunt for the perfect baby accessories, Guy and I discovered a small family-owned baby store in Houston. I walked in with my dog-eared and worn baby book and was greeted by a car-seat expert. She began to show us all of the car seats they sold as I feverishly combed the pages of my book to keep up. Every car seat that she showed us was 5-star rated. She politely turned to me and said that I didn't need my book, that everything in her store would have a 5-star rating, she couldn't imagine selling anything else. I remember the look on Guy's face as we realized that we had the first puzzle piece of the vision that we were seeking for Ridley's.

Right in the middle of that baby store, we realized the value of being an expert in the field you are in and putting the quality and safety of products you sell as your top priority. And so began our efforts to do just that: we began to educate ourselves on the products that

we already knew to be of great quality. We toured the facilities that our chemicals are made in; we talked with the chemists that made them. If it wasn't something that we would consider our baby being exposed to, it wasn't something for us to sell. After all, who were we selling to? Schools, hospitals, daycares, churches... all of these are people, children, just like ours, precious and in need of protecting.

As a ministry leader, the same burden has been placed on you, to protect your people by education and by placing safety as a top priority.

One of the most common chemicals we see misused is bleach. Bleach is often used to sanitize and treat mold. One of the most concerning things during the cleanup of Hurricane Harvey was the number of people we saw and heard using bleach to clean up flooded areas, and even spraying bleach to kill mold. Bleach will not remedy a mold problem. It can, however, mask a mold problem and create an environment for mold to multiply in.

The character of bleach is such that it should never be used for the treatment of mold or bacteria, and here's why:

Bleach Won't Reach.

Bleach is made to be used on hard surfaces only. It is not designed to be used on porous surfaces because bleach does not penetrate. Mold, however, does penetrate: it grows finger-like roots and can burrow down deep into porous surfaces like wood. Surface cleaning can never get mold out of the pores.

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Bleach Bleaches.

If you have ever made a mishap in the laundry room, then you know all too well that bleach bleaches. The problem when trying to get rid of mold is that if you bleach it, you can't see it but it is still there. And the same as with all horror movies, you can't kill it if you can't see it. The surface may have been bleached, but the mold that has penetrated is still alive and growing.

Bleach is Water.

Weren't we trying to clean up the damage of water after Harvey? Exactly! Bleach contains 90% water. And mold and bacteria love water: they use it to flourish. When bleach is applied, the chlorine evaporates quickly on the surface and leaves water to penetrate into the pores, giving mold and bacteria a perfect breeding ground. Because of this, using bleach can often cause mold to become worse than it was originally.

Bleach is Caustic.

What is caustic? It means that it is able to burn or corrode. Have you ever bleached a hole in something? Or left bleach sitting on a surface? It starts to deteriorate the surface. Just look at the shelf where you keep your bleach and you can start to see some of its effects, and that's from a small amount. When people spray bleach and leave it to sit on surfaces, bleach will do what bleach does and begin to break down what it's in contact with. So if you have sprayed this on your wood, it's going to weaken the wood by breaking down the wood fibers. We need the wood that frames and supports our homes and churches to be sound and strong, not weakened.

Bleach is Toxic.

There is a reason why the image associated with toxic is the skull and crossbones. It's deadly. Bleach is known to cause brain damage just from exposure. At room temperature bleach emits dioxins, which are known to cause cancer. And we haven't even started on the damage if it is inhaled, ingested, or gets into your eyes. You may have experienced an oily feeling on your fingers if you've ever touched bleach, which is the layers of your skin dissolving. Bleach is toxic.

I hope that this has educated you a little on bleach and its effects. There are so many great bleach-free alternatives that can effectively clean and safely sanitize. There is so much to learn about the chemicals that you are using, and we would love the opportunity to teach you and help you protect your ministry by using safe and correct chemicals. ✚

Vanessa Cordell



Vanessa and her husband Guy own Ridley's Vacuum & Janitorial Supply in Houston TX. Previously, Vanessa was in full-time ministry for a decade before becoming a wife, business owner, and mother of three. She is a graduate of Southwestern Assemblies of God University with Bachelors Degrees in Church Ministry specializing in Youth Ministry, Cross Cultural Missions, Education and a minor in Bible. Vanessa is passionate about using her business platform to help further the Kingdom's work.

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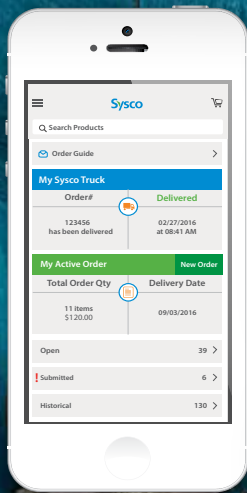
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