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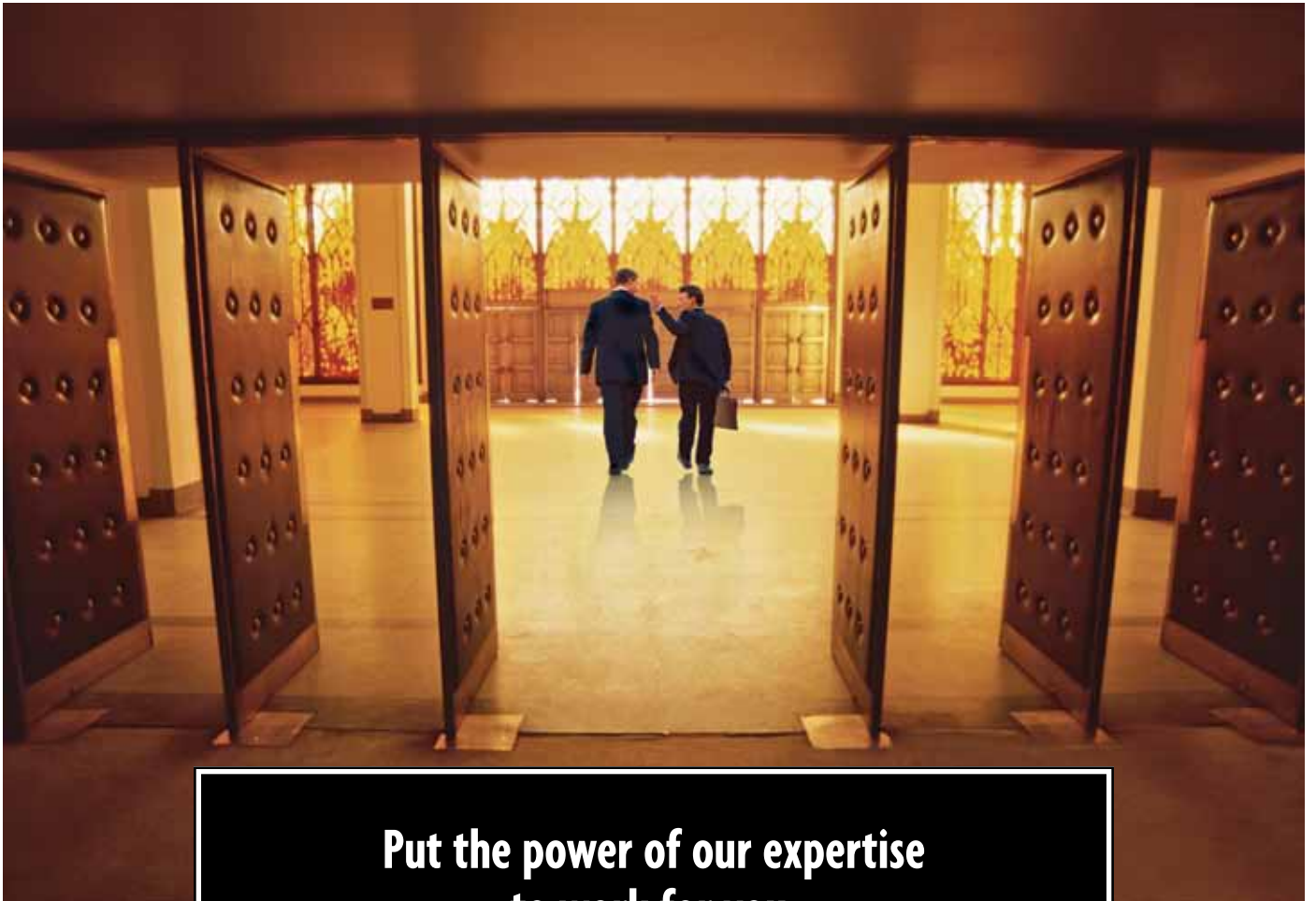
2009
Church Staff
Conference
Brochure
Inside!

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ProdigalSong

Jim & Teresa Robinson

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CONTENTS

FEBRUARY 2009

FEATURE ARTICLE

Love and the Lonely page 16

What if Maggie Argo were to read my intimate message out loud. . . .
what if all the other kids laughed at me?



Departments

Clean Sweep

Very few of the hundreds of cleaning service companies in Texas truly understand what “green” cleaning entails.
Page 6

More Power To You

As a church administrator, you want an energy consultant that is not simply a “price shopper.”
Page 10

We’ve Got You Covered

A Section 125 Cafeteria Plan can provide immediate savings to employees in terms of benefits. It will also provide a payroll tax reduction to the employer.
Page 40

Know Your Vendor

Church Interiors of Texas is the Texas part of the nation’s leading church renovation company, **Church Interiors, Inc.** **Mity-Lite** is well known for its wide variety of durable, lightweight furniture systems.
Page 43



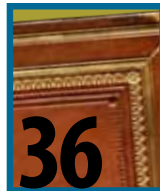
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The Top Ten reasons for attending this year’s CO+OP Church Staff Conference are . . .



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*Editors Note: For submitting articles, artwork or comments about this publication, please contact:
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Time is the one thing that we all have in the same amount. How we choose to use that time says a lot about what we value. Time can be shared because a calendar enables us to determine what we will do together. We can do vacations and holidays and birthdays and meetings and events, because we get them on our calendar – and the calendars of those that are important to us. And yet, our calendar is an everyday tool that we may take for granted.

Together is a concept. What we do together (with others) enriches us. The shared common experiences hold the potential of serendipity – something found unexpectedly. Serving together involves commitment, and the precious resource of time. Save the Date and come be with us on Thursday, February 19 for the **2009 Annual Church Staff Conference: Together We Serve.**



Full details of the conference are in the brochure in the center portion of this magazine. There will be 60 Workshops in 6 categories featuring 32 speakers. Acting on your recommendations, we are adding two additional financial workshops and two Certified Public Accountants that focus on ministry. Be sure to bring your finance committees, treasurers, and accounting personnel.

You will have the opportunity to attend workshops that specialize in software that you use in your ministries, such as Shelby Systems, Outlook, ServiceU, and PhoneTree. We will have plenty of leadership classes for Senior and Executive Pastors or those who lead a team on their staff.

CO+OP vendors and exhibitors will be in CO+OP Alley all day long. The keynote and special music from ProdigalSong, award winning composer, musician and author Jim Robinson, will bless your soul and touch your heart.

Save money: Register by mail or online not later than February 9.

It is our pleasure and our opportunity to provide this resource for you to refresh your spirit leading into the Easter season.

In these days of economic tension, our CO+OP remains after 21 years an excellent beacon of lower prices and excellent services from CO+OP vendors who are committed to helping churches save money for ministry. Be sure to check out the CO+OP vendors as you consider where to get your goods and services.

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Together We Serve.

Dan Bishop
Executive Director

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cleansweep

Green Cleaning

by Bruce Albright

Our community is abuzz with “green cleaning.” Since the introduction of LEED® certification for commercial buildings and the enthusiasm by facility managers to implement healthier, environmental standards, cleaning service companies have rushed to the market with “green” printed on everything.

However, very few of the hundreds of cleaning service companies in Texas truly understand what “green” cleaning entails. Cleaning operations for these “green washed” companies do very little to protect the health of occupants, improve indoor air quality or improve our structural environment. Green washed organizations primarily practice a Trash-N-Dash system of collecting trash and spot cleaning. The only change they have made is to switch to “green chemicals.” This has developed into a new risk for facility managers looking to implement green cleaning. Without knowing the difference, it would be easy to award your cleaning contract to a green washed company. To avoid this new risk, it becomes necessary to understand the intent, standards, and requirements needed to implement a green cleaning program in your facility.

What is Green Cleaning?

“Green Cleaning” as it is defined by most is the use of cleaning chemicals and equipment that has a lesser environmental impact than traditional products. However, the intent is to clean in a manner that reduces the exposure of occupants, maintenance workers, and visitors to harmful particulate matter (PM). Particulate matter adversely affects air quality, health, building systems and our environment. The Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) goal for clean air is **“Protect and improve the air so it is healthy to breathe, and risks to human health and the environment are reduced.”** So we can see that a cornerstone of green cleaning is operational protocols that address indoor air quality (EQ).

Current green cleaning standards require that a vacuum operate at or below 69dba and have a filtration level that captures 96% of PM that is .003 microns or larger. To achieve the intent of green cleaning, you must go farther. Custodians responsible for vacuuming should be trained in the proper use and maintenance of the vacuum, how to properly empty the dust collection bag so that PM is not re-distributed into the air, when to check the filter bag, and to log the filter bag changes.

The standards and protocols required to implement green cleaning start with a cleaning company’s written program.

The program should include, at minimum, the following:

- Custodial Operational Procedures
- Custodial Staffing Plan
- Custodial Training Program
- Certified Cleaning Chemicals and Equipment (including Microfiber, MSDS Written Program, Cleaning for At-Risk Occupants)
- Verification Audit
- Continuous Improvement Policy
- Log Books
- Color Coding
- Document Management

Each of these elements must be detailed in-depth and in concert with your written green cleaning policy.

Professional Janitorial Service offers a half day work shop on green cleaning. If you would like to attend a workshop, contact Jim Shaw at jshaw@pjs.com ✦

Bruce Albright

Bruce Albright is a LEED® Accredited Professional for Professional Janitorial Services in Houston. If you want to contact Bruce, call him at 713-515-3026 or email balbright@pjs.com.



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How to Choose an Energy Consultant

by Jim Bono, TES Partner

Texas Electricity Deregulation: Need Help?

On January 1, 2002, the State of Texas ventured into the land of electric deregulation. Since that time, many changes have occurred within the electric market, but even with open market conditions, electricity prices have continued to climb. So how do you maximize your energy dollar in this new environment?

Maybe you should consider a full service energy consultant. Not all energy consultants are the same. Do your homework. As a church administrator, you want an energy consultant that is not simply a “price shopper.” The energy consultant should have an experienced seasoned staff that is familiar with the Texas deregulated electric market. Many former utility employees are choosing to work as energy consultants. This is a great benefit to the consumer. An experienced staff is much more capable of guiding you through the confusion associated with a deregulated electric market. Sure, helping you determine the lowest cost for electricity is a very important part; however, there are many other energy issues that you may face and you will need that partner to assist you along the way.

The job of the full service energy consultant is to develop relationships with all of the major Retail Electric Providers (REP)

that are registered to do business within Texas and other open market states. Thousands of customers such as manufacturing, storage and distribution, governmental agencies, public and private schools, general office and retail space, restaurants, auto dealerships and many other types of businesses, partner on a daily basis with an energy consultant.

What should you look for when shopping for a full service energy consultant?

The consulting company should offer nationwide consulting services related to the following: Energy Procurement, Energy-Saving Equipment, Energy Savings, Procedures, Bill Auditing and Monitoring of the industry.

Many energy consultants may also be registered aggregators with the Texas Public Utility Commission. What does aggregation mean? Aggregation is simply the bringing together of customers with similar load patterns in order to obtain better pricing for all customers. Be cautious... aggregation is not always the best route for customers to take. This is where the consultant would evaluate your situation and make a recommendation. Full service energy consultants also provide the analysis needed to compare an “apples to apples” bid from multiple REP’s, which allows the customer to select

the product, price and contract best suited for them. The consultant will negotiate electric agreements on behalf of their customer to secure the best possible agreement.

Many full service energy consultants collaborate with engineering service companies to provide energy management options for their customers. These services might include comprehensive energy studies, facility audits, lighting retrofits, cogeneration studies, substation and distribution design, and utility bill auditing. With the implementation of power factor penalty by TXU Electric Delivery, power factor correction studies are available as one of the services offered by these qualified energy consultants.

Energy consultants also assist their customers with resolving any billing issues that they may have with their chosen REP. It can be very difficult to reach your electric provider, and a qualified consultant will do that work for you. The consultant will also assist you in the adding or subtracting of accounts as well as overall account management.

The most important item that a full service energy consultant provides is "market analysis" or "market timing." The monitoring of energy markets is a full time job; just as your church business is a full time job. If you really want a deregulated market to work for you, then you must monitor that market daily. A dedicated energy consultant does that for you. The consultant will notify you when friendly market conditions exist allowing you the opportunity to capitalize on those conditions and maximize your energy dollars.

The chart below represents the trading value of natural gas each week over the past three and a half years. Why is this important? Natural gas fuels most of the electricity generators in Texas. Changes in natural gas pricing are therefore the leading indicator of changes in electricity pricing.

As a result of the recent downturn in natural gas pricing, electricity is now contracting at record-low pricing... lower than we have seen in Texas in years! This applies to not only electricity for churches, but also for your church members' homes.

A full service consultant should be your energy management partner. The Energy Consultant allows you to focus on your church business while he focuses on your energy needs. Together this partnership will provide you with the lowest cost for electricity and an overall energy management partner, as you need it.

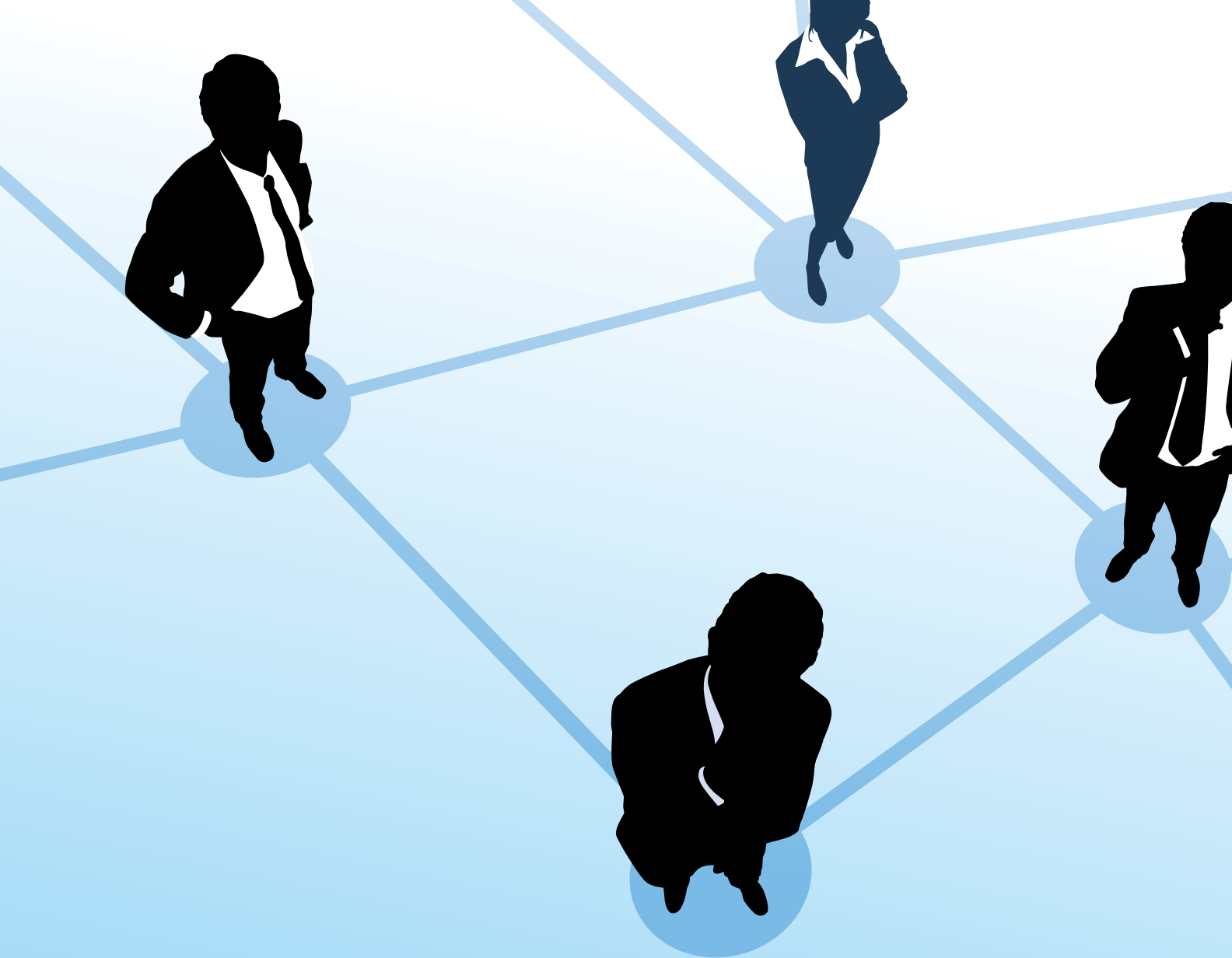
The CO+OP recently added TES Energy Services, LP as a CO+OP vendor offering energy consulting services and electricity. Please contact Michael Bernstein at TES (972-447-0447 x105) for a review of your electricity needs and residential offerings for your church members. Visit the TES website at www.tesenergyservices.com where you can request information as well. Use "Church COOP" as a promotion code for discounted rates. ✦

Jim Bono

Jim Bono is a Partner at TES Energy Services, LP. He can be reached at 972-447-0447.

Weekly natural gas strip prices since 2004





Connect through **CO+OP**

By Becky Burns

Top 10 Reasons to Attend the Church Staff Conference



Is your network reliable? Do you find yourself in a “dead zone” of isolation and burn out? Networking is one way we can serve together. The key to networking is connecting with others—sharing knowledge, resources, time, energy, friends, associates, empathy, compassion, passion, etc. Together we can discover ways to help others become more successful. In turn, we will reap what we sow. Participate in one of the most reliable networks of ministry professionals and services today—CO+OP Church Supplies & Services!



The CO+OP is committed to uniting ministry leaders and administrators together to fulfill a common mission with the most efficient and effective resources. Their most productive tool for networking is the annual Church Staff Conference. At this conference, you can maximize opportunities to build strong networks with other ministry leaders, churches, and vendors... as well as enrich personal growth development. Workshops are offered in tracks intentionally designed to promote a healthy organization, and vendors are showcased to advertise the latest ministry tools and products to benefit your organization.

“What makes this conference stand out and will I really walk away from this conference with pertinent information I can actually apply in my office?” I am so glad you asked! It has been my privilege to participate in this conference for over 10 years as an attendee, a speaker, or a vendor, and each time I have gained insight and ideas to take back to my office, as well as having been refreshed in my spirit.

Hear are my TOP 10 REASONS for attending this year's CO+OP Church Staff Conference:

10 Polish your navigation skills in one of Texas' largest cities; consider it a challenge! Houston is infamous for its traffic, streets, and highways. Put a positive spin on it and approach this trip with the same enthusiasm as a puzzle maze. After all, our attitude dictates the kind of experience we will have. You and your conference buddies can turn this road trip into a fun one!

9 Enjoy great food—snacks, coffee, and lunch is included in your registration! The conference organizers make sure you have enough brain food to keep you awake during the workshop sessions and many vendors provide a chocolate incentive.

8 Visit the conference vendors—get demos on new products, cost-effective supplies and services, sign-up for great door prizes, and get a neat bag to carry it all in! You are sure to leave with enough information and ideas to take your office to the next level.

7 Participate in trainings for today's most popular ministry tools. The vendor showcase track offers a first-hand look at the latest ministry products and services, hands-on training, and discussion to improve efficiency in the office.

6 Receive continuing education credits—you can receive credits for every workshop. It is never too late to learn something new. Education is key to progressing forward.

5 Gain insights to increase productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness. Attend one of the workshops in the Personnel, Finance, Operations, and Leadership tracks to discover strategic methods for advancement.

4 Learn from professionals and recognized speakers. Hear from these experienced individuals as they share insights to generate ideas, strategies, and goals for solving your latest professional challenges.

3 Discover strategies for leadership development and ministry growth. Implement principles to work smarter not harder and promote volunteer involvement. Ephesians 4 directs leaders to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. Together we serve.

2 Rekindle your professional vision, mission, and passion—take time to “sharpen the saw.” Come to the conference and attend at least one Personal & Spiritual Growth workshop to remember why you began your ministry journey, to rekindle your commitment, and to refocus your efforts to achieve desired results.

1 Support and participate in a reliable network in the ministry community. Meet other ministry professionals and vendors that know exactly where you are now, where you want to go, and how you can advance to the next level. Despite our differences in religious doctrines, we are one in Spirit and can network together to advance the kingdom of God.

The Church Staff Conference is a great place of influence and encouragement to connect with others who share a common purpose. It is a place where Hebrews 10:24-25 comes to life:

“And let us consider and give attentive, continuous care to watching over one another, studying how we may stir up (stimulate and incite) to love and helpful deeds and noble activities, not forsaking or neglecting to assemble together [as believers], as is the habit of some people, but admonishing (warning, urging, and encouraging) one another, and all the more faithfully as you see the day approaching.” (Amplified)

Together we can discover ways to stir up God's gift in others and encourage them to serve Him with gladness and singleness of heart. We can build a network that will sharpen each other as we strive to accomplish our ministry goals. Networking together is powerful.

“...And this is only the beginning of what they will do, and now nothing they have imagined they can do will be impossible for them.” (Genesis 11:6, Amplified) ✦

Becky Burns



Becky is currently serving Westover Hills Assembly of God as Executive Assistant. She equips and encourages through conferences, workshops, consulting and mentoring. You can reach her at bburns@whag.org.

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**A VALENTINE FOR
THE DISCONNECTED**

© Jim Robinson

When I was in the second grade, I fell in love with Maggie Argo.

Maggie Argo had golden hair and freckles and wore pretty print dresses. When she smiled, the whole room lit up, and I would feel a sort of warm flush across my cheeks. Though I wasn't really sure what love was supposed to feel like, and didn't really admit even wanting to feel it, something nonetheless would wrap itself around my aching heart every time this little girl came near me. When I looked at her, an emptiness filled me inside. Maggie Argo took my breath away.

For what seemed like a long time in my short life, I had been looking for an opportunity to let the little girl with the golden hair know how I felt. The fear of doing so could never quite squelch the burning need. It seemed that I would literally burst if I didn't at least let her know how important it was for me to be near her. Fall had passed, and Thanksgiving and Christmas. . . time gone by, and still I had not summoned the needed courage.

Then, I became aware of the perfect opportunity. For weeks I had been anticipating the day when all the students would write Valentine's Day cards to one another. I had come to learn that Valentine's Day was about Love, whatever that was; a day when people who cared for each other would do things to show their amorous feelings. My dad always gave my mom candy, and usually red roses. I remember her eyes lighting up as he would come through the door carrying the crimson blossoms in a glass vase. I wanted to make Maggie Argo feel like that.

Having resigned myself to the mysterious feelings within my skinny chest, I felt like Valentine's Day would be a perfect chance to show my true feelings for Maggie Argo. I would write her a special card, and inside I would confess my undying affection. This was a most scary thought indeed. But not as scary, somehow, as the thought of going through life without her ever knowing how I felt.

The night before the big day, I spent a long time thinking about the right words to say. My mom bought a big bag of somewhat generic cards for my sisters and me. They had all sorts of corny sayings and cute drawings. There were zoo animal-themed cards ("Have a Grrrrreat! Valentine's Day"), space alien cards ("I would fly to the moon for you, Valentine"), and even talking vegetables and fruits ("You drive me bananas, Valentine!"). I finally decided on something more intimate, with two attractive vegetables staring deeply into one another's eyes—"Lettuce Be Valentines!" I thought Maggie Argo would like that one. She and I had never really talked before, because each time I attempted to speak to her my tongue would swell,

and I couldn't swallow. If I made any sounds at all, they were mostly unintelligible, and Maggie Argo would simply smile that paralyzing smile, and walk away. I felt that the undeniable humor and wit embodied by the two heads of iceberg lettuce wrapped in an embrace would be the ice breaker, so to speak, allowing my confidence and cleverness to finally become known. I would let the card speak for me. After much tortured consideration, on the inside of the card I wrote these words:

I THINK YOU ARE THE NICEST GIRL IN THIS SCHOOL.

I had given the whole thing a great deal of thought. The words seemed right; not too assertive, but clearly holding deeper meaning. I put the card into its envelope, and placed it near my bed. Lying awake that night, I opened and reread the note many times before falling asleep, imagining Maggie Argo's life-giving smile. I felt sure that this time, her smile would be just for me.

The next morning, I clutched the box of cards to my chest as I entered the classroom. Along the bottom of the chalkboard were taped brown paper lunch bags, one for each kid, our names written on them in red marker by our teacher. I followed my classmates along the line, dropping in cards that my mother had helped me complete. When I came to Maggie Argo's bag, I froze. She had drawn a red heart on the front. The sight of this vulnerable-looking, hand-crayoned heart somehow brought into my spirit an unfathomable yet profound sense of . . . of responsibility. In that terrible moment, all my confidence left me. I wasn't at all sure I could go through with it. I had written more than just the perfunctory salutations. Suddenly, horrible images flashed through my mind: What if Maggie Argo were to read my intimate message out loud. . . what if all the other kids laughed at me? Or, even worse. . . what if she were to be embarrassed? My own reputation was expendable. Hers was not.

My shaking love note hovered over her open bag like a hand grenade. I closed my eyes, took a breath, and let love lead. Risking everything, I let the card drop in.

Later, as all the kids laughed and opened their cards, I could barely concentrate. I went through the motions, looking at the names in my cards, but barely seeing them. I kept an eye on Maggie Argo. Sitting several seats behind her, and one row over, I could see the delicate angle of her face silhouetted against the window. The rest of the room full of kids, the noise, the sunlight coming through the window. . . all of it seemed a dream, everything waiting for one moment, one heartbeat. My life slowed and stilled, and finally came to a breathless halt.

And then. Then, just as I had almost decided to run away, to give up on the hope of love and resign myself to the vague loneliness I had felt all my life... just as fear nearly separated me from the endless possibilities of joining hearts with one very special person... just then, Maggie Argo turned slowly in her seat, and looked right at me. And the world was silent. Maggie Argo smiled.

* * *

Way back then, when I was a little boy still full of wonder, and unafraid to wonder such things, I once asked my grandmother why God made the world, and people along with it.

"God made us," she said gently, "so that He wouldn't be alone."

Her answer satisfied the innocent boy in me then, and in a place having little to do with theology, satisfies the boy in me still. Having created man, and knowing it to be good, God quickly decided that it was not good enough. We were never meant to be alone; it doesn't feel right. Perhaps God didn't like the feeling either.

Maybe this explains, at least a little, why some of us can feel lonely in a room full of people. I have experienced this feeling off and on for as long as I can remember. Now all grown up, I have learned some official-sounding names for this feeling, and I am mostly at peace knowing that I am an addict and have bipolar disorder. By God's grace, I haven't had a drink or drug in sixteen years, and my depression is mostly under control. I have a wife and two kids who love me, and I love them. There is so much in my life to be thankful for now, because I have known destitution and isolation and an inner emptiness that threatened to kill me. God has been good to me.

At times like Valentine's Day, though, I can't help feeling a sort of veiled sorrow. I wonder why God decided to give me my life back, while so many others seem lost... lost within themselves, within the walls of their own sense of unworthiness, their own hopelessness. Maybe it's because as a counselor, I work with these people one on one, and stare into their eyes. And they look back into mine. And in these moments I am convicted, day after day. I can never forget. I know who they are. I know how they feel.

I wonder if Adam felt some indefinable ache that one night before he drifted off to sleep. I wonder if he dreamed of what God would do that night, taking a part of him to make another

someone. And though it wouldn't take long for the man and woman to learn fear and shame and the kind of haunting loneliness that to some degree lurks within each of us even now, I wonder if... I wonder if, only for a little while, the three of them felt eternally, blissfully connected.

This desire for connection drives us all, really. It drives us either away from or toward our Heavenly Father. We seek fulfillment in people, places, substances, behaviors... we drink and drug, work and worry, worshiping wealth, seeking sanctuary from the nagging discomfort... and always it is more and more and more, but still we cannot fill the emptiness. And yet, some of us are able to turn and run to the Well, and finally slake our thirst. At least until we wander away again, as little children often do. Having tasted the living water, though, we're never the same again. We know.

It's risky, of course. Love will cost us our very lives. Even when I was hopeless and drunk, the idea of giving myself over to this most powerful of things—Love—felt in some ways more frightening than the living hell in which I lived. And so I stood just out of reach, my hands hovering near the face of God, so afraid to risk touching such unfathomable beauty, peace, hope. I recall a man grown old before his time, lost and slowly dying in his dark addictions. And I remember how dangerous it felt, this surrendering to Love...

And then. Then, just as I had almost decided to run away, to give up on the hope of love and resign myself to the vague loneliness I had felt all my life... just as fear nearly separated me from the endless possibilities of joining hearts with one very special person...

Christ came, finally, to forever put an end to our loneliness. Through Him and in Him, we have access to an intimacy that defies our emptiness, and casts off our chains.

On this day celebrating love, I pray each of us might discover Love—the kind of Love that does not judge or shame, but gently opens to us the arms that won't let go. I pray that every hopeless heart wandering through a broken world will turn for Home, finally seeing through our tears that no matter how many times we turn our backs on Jesus, He is always facing us. Succumbing to the ultimate connection, may each of us know this: When in helpless faith we surrender to Him our shattered souls, loneliness is a prison that cannot hold us.

* * *

LET
LOVE
LEAD

I don't know whatever happened to Maggie Argo. She moved away at the end of the school year, and I never saw her again. And though I was to learn many kinds of loneliness along my journey back to Christ, I had at least on that one Valentine's Day come to understand that love is both fair and fleeting... a precious gift to be cherished rather than understood.

May the Love of Christ Jesus fill you, now and ever more. Amen. ✦

Jim Robinson



Jim Robinson is an award-winning songwriter, musician, speaker, author and therapist. Jim is the founder of ProdigalSong Christian Ministry, utilizing music and life experience to heal the broken spirit. He is the Keynote speaker and worship leader for the 2009 Church Staff conference in Houston. Contact him through www.prodigalsong.com.

NACBA

2009 Meetings

Alamo Chapter – San Antonio

Meeting on the third Thursday of each month at 11:30 a.m.
Contact: Jodie Sell, 210-494-3455, x231
jodie.sell@coker.org

Capital Chapter – Austin

Meeting on the second Thursday of each month at 12 noon.
Contact: Mollie DeVries, 512-255-3322
mdevries@palmvalleylutheranchurch.org

Dallas Chapter

Meeting on the third Tuesday of each month in South Dallas at 11:30 a.m., and the third Thursday of each month in North Dallas at 11:30 a.m.
Contact: Dave Roberson, 972-423-4506
droberson@firstmethodistplano.org
www.nacbadallas.org

Fort Worth Chapter

Meeting on the third Thursday of each month, time varies.
Contact: Vicki Morgan, 817-326-4693
vmorgan@actonbaptist.org

Houston Metro Chapter

Meeting on the third Thursday of each month at 11:30 a.m.
Contact: Kay Irvine, 281-353-4413
kay@churchthatcares.org
www.nacbahouston.org

North Houston Metro Chapter

Meeting on the second Thursday of each month at 11:30 a.m.
Contact: Margie Serio, 936-521-1673
margie.serio@wcbc.us

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



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Annual CO+OP Church Staff Conference in Houston



February 19, 2009

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Keynote & Special Music - ProdigalSong

Not many years ago, alcohol and drugs had taken nearly everything from Jim Robinson. He had no job, no car and no home. He was a suicidal drunk and addict, and nearly died.

But in 1989, something wonderful happened. Today, ProdigalSong is an outreach ministry that tells a wonderful story of how one lost man, in one dark and desperate moment, turned to find that Christ Jesus had been there all along.

Utilizing his gifts as a professional counselor, speaker, author, and songwriter, Jim founded ProdigalSong Ministries in 2000. ProdigalSong has evolved into

a vibrant mission that brings a testimony of hope and healing and provides professional resources that address the issues of addiction and recovery, obsessive/compulsive behaviors, mood disorders, family healing, and related life issues. With this outreach, the ProdigalSong team shares a message of what we call God's Healing for the Broken Spirit.

If you or anyone you love has been touched by the apparent hopelessness of these issues, Jim's story of new life, portrayed through musical performance, spoken testimony, and educational workshops, will truly be a blessing.

Personnel

Cheryl Marting - Unleash Your Team's Potential

Have you ever thought that your leadership team brings a talented array of gifts, but actual "team" and momentum-building decision making remain hidden just below the surface? Learn how to unleash leadership horsepower by creating healthy team dynamics, building a culture of trust and improving communication. Also learn the basics of personality differences and how to collaborate well, so that teams can better align to advance your ministry's mission.

Kevin Conrad – Background Screening...A Policy for Your Church

This informative seminar is designed to answer all your questions about screening your current employees, and pre-screening your potential employees and volunteers. Learn the difference between a "cheap" background check and a thorough background investigation, what can and can't be reported and why, what you need to do to be FCRA compliant, how to design a screening policy for your church, how to select a screening company, and many other topics.

Richard Brann – Hiring Practices That Keep You Out of Court

Churches face new and novel legal pitfalls in hiring employees, and must be aware of potential liability that could result from the employee's actions, both within and outside the scope of the employee's duties and actions. Churches must also know about the numerous statutory prohibitions against discrimination in the hiring process and know how to comply with consent requirements when performing certain types of background checks on prospective employees. Learn ways to navigate these hiring pitfalls.

Doug Reed – Motivation Through Teambuilding

How can we function more productively as a team? How can we get the most from each team member? How can we deal with those hard-to-discuss personality issues? Through hands-on, adventure-based activities, we will walk through the key components of effective, high-performing teams. We will learn about motivating, serving and leading an effective, efficient church staff team.

Kevin Whitney – Section 125: Why Pay More Taxes Than Necessary?

A Watson Wyatt study showed that high-trust organizations out-performed low-trust organizations. This workshop will look at the critical issue of trust on the staff team. Why we need trust and what builds trust, and what we do when betrayal occurs. Participants will learn the waves of trust and learn how to process betrayal in their own lives and in their team. Come ready to participate and leave with a renewed sense of connection with your team.

Kevin Whitney – HRA's and HSA's: What's the Difference?

While everyone is talking about Health Reimbursement Arrangements and Health Savings Accounts, not everyone understands them. This session will go through the basics of both types of plans, how to set them up, and how to maintain them.

Finance

Ann Williams – To Expense or Not Expense... That is the Question!

Have you ever wondered how and when you should capitalize (record) purchases as assets versus expensing them? This session will cover which assets to record as well as the how, when and where to record them.

Ann Williams – Are We Really Reconciling Our Bank Statements?

This class will cover the basics of reconciling your bank accounts to the monthly bank statement. It will include two different methods of reconciling (direct and indirect) and the four-way proof of cash.

John Ratliff – Ten Things You Don't Want Your Auditor to Find

Is it tickets to Rio, expensive cars in the parking lot, condo on the Riviera? Probably not, but attend this session and learn what to avoid in your church, such as undocumented expenditures, personal use of church assets, unreported and unrelated income, and bank accounts not on the general ledger. You will also learn about 1099's, childcare vouchers and gift cards, contribution receipts and allowance accounts.

John Ratliff – Professional Services/GAAP Financial Statements

Learn the differences between audits, reviews or compilations, and how professional fees are determined. This workshop also shows you how you can save costs of audits and the common errors when working with financial statements.

Leadership

Becky Burns – Vision and Mission: Divide or Conquer

Communication gaps, departmental tug of wars, individual agendas, and divided staff members can exist in a church office setting. In this workshop, learn key strategies on how to avoid common pitfalls and 'do church' as a team by implementing common courtesies as part of your office culture. You can either be divided or collaborate together to conquer the vision and mission of your church.

Becky Burns – Engaging Servant Potential: Building a Volunteer Ministry

What could your ministry accomplish if you had more volunteers? Do your volunteers view their service as a duty or drudgery they have to endure? This workshop is designed to assist leaders build a volunteer ministry where individuals creatively cooperate to engage their unique gifts and talents. Learn key lessons to motivating volunteers to serve with joy, as well as important components for building a volunteer ministry.

Dr. Stephen Trammell – How to Advance Your Leadership Potential

As a leader, you can get so focused on leading others that you bypass the priority of personal leadership development. In this session, you will gain valuable insights that will advance your leadership potential.

John D. Ogletree, Jr. – Pastoral Leadership During a Crisis

This workshop will explore the types of crises a congregation can experience and provide the pastors leadership skills and steps to work with leaders and members to restore or maintain church health, and faith to turn a crisis into a conquest to the glory of God.

Michael Euliss – Leadership at Every Level

No matter what your role or title, leadership is key to making your church all it can be. In this exciting and encouraging session, the instructor will use Biblical and historical examples to teach participants how they can lead using their talents and spiritual gifts, regardless of their position or role.

Will Mancini – The Clarity Zone: Discovering God's Unique Call

Are you tired of an over-programmed approach to ministry? Do you have a vision beyond just meeting members' needs, responding to a crisis or building the next church box? In "The Clarity Zone," you will be guided through the process of helping leaders discover their church's unique contribution to the kingdom. Learn how the leadership team can really discern God's call for your church.

Will Mancini – Simplimentation: Advancing a 'Less is More' Approach to Ministry

Learn practical ways to unclutter the typical program approach and unleash a simple missional focus. Get rid of the inertia of yesterday's programs and the baggage of the seven-day-a-week "busy church" with this "Simplimentation" team seminar, which will reveal how you can move people from "going to church" to "being the church." This seminar provides powerful tools and conversation starters for immediate application.

Media & Communications

Cheryl Marting – Branding 101: Communicating Vision Visually

Is a brand a logo or a cool look, or something more? Great brands communicate a vision. Done well, it gives those inside the church a clear visual connection to who you are and where you are going and for those outside the church, the opportunity to tell your story to the community. What goes into creating an enduring and recognizable brand? This session unpacks the necessary basics that go into creating a brand that captivates.

Jeff Crilley – Marketing Without Money

All of us would like to take our PR game to the next level. And who better to help us do that than a media insider? This Emmy Award winning TV reporter will share the secrets to getting good news stories that even many seasoned PR pros don't know. Combining learning with laughter, this fun, interactive, information-packed talk includes takeaways and a demonstration to illustrate one of his points that will have everyone attending blowing bubbles. No kidding!

Yvon Prehn – An Integrated Marketing and Communications Plan

Churches pour huge amounts of time and money into preparations for Easter and are rewarded with what is usually the largest attendance of the year—but what happens the following Sunday? This seminar will present an integrated church marketing plan using the web, print, and other media to turn your big events into big opportunities for continuing growth for your church.

Yvon Prehn – A Communication Plan to Accomplish Your Mission

Leaders articulate a vision; a website video illustrates it; a postcard advertises it—but are people responding? Do they attend the small groups you advertise? Do they volunteer for the ministries that have needs? This seminar will surprise you with a church communication plan unlike any you've heard before that will make certain that your folks will put into practice what you preach.

Yvon Prehn – Design Strategies to Help You Communicate Effectively

The form may change, but the rules of classic design never do. Effective designers use timeless principles in all they create...from postcards to websites. This seminar will give you a crash course in design and easy ways to use it to make your church communications more effective.

Yvon Prehn – Creating a Free Church Website

Create a church website with a huge amount of storage, links to video hosting, audio links, ability to store almost an unlimited number of PDF downloads, image uploads, comments, and have the ability to tweak HTML. You can add graphics, instant statistics, a customizable header, and so much more...for free! How is this possible? Come to this seminar and find out—no tricks, just some fresh uses of an old product.

Doug Reed, Chris Green, James Hornstra – Mobile Ministry

Everyone is on the go! Pastors and church staff members are no exception. During this session, we will discuss both a variety of technologies available which will enable your staff to work efficiently on the go as well as options for your entire staff to work remotely. With gas prices sky rocketing and traffic increasing many organizations are looking to alternate solutions. From handheld devices to remote access, there are many options available.

Doug Reed, Chris Green, James Hornstra – To Mac or Not to Mac

“To Mac or Not to Mac” is a question many users have been facing over the last year. Should we give in and purchase Macs for those staff members constantly requesting them? During this session, we will dive into the pros and cons of integrating Macs into your environment. In which cases does it make sense to purchase Macs? Is it more expensive? What do I need to make them work in my PC environment?

Doug Reed, Chris Green, James Hornstra – Cool Technology Stuff

Twitter, Blogs, etc, etc... What are all these new technologies out there in cyberspace? How can we use them effectively to minister to our constituents? You may not have budget for them all, but you should at least know your options. Come learn about the latest and greatest technology tools and products available to you and your pastoral staff.

Casey Bryant and Mike Jones – Getting the Most from Communication Technology

In recent years, lots of productivity-enhancing features and new technologies have entered the market. Are you getting the most from your communication solution? DataVox will provide an overview of current communication technologies and show how the new features could enhance your communications and improve your workflow. Plus, we'll discuss how you can evaluate your current bills to see if you are paying too much per month for phone charges.

Randy Hamilton – Making Outlook Work for You... Tips & Tricks

Get familiar with the tools and capabilities available in the Microsoft Outlook client. The session includes such topics as using the Calendar to keep track of appointments, important events, and setting reminders; using Folders; setting up and using Inbox Rules to route your mail, as well as using the Contacts feature. Learn how to build and use Personal Folders (.pst files) for archiving your mail, filtering out spam and unwanted mail, and personalizing your settings.

Randy Hamilton – Today's Technology Threats: Internet to Email

Based on the book by the same title, this workshop is specifically designed to equip church leaders who are not the “lead leader.” Participants will learn to better understand the unique dynamics of their roles, regardless of their titles. We'll explore what it means to be a subordinate and a leader, to be “deep” and “wide” in thinking and expertise, and to practice contentment without giving up on dreams.

Brian Jones – Website Relevancy

Audience expectations for your website are higher than you think. What are these expectations today and what will they be in the near future? This session will explore the starting points for every successful website: Understanding your audiences' needs and expectations, and creating a relevant vision, strategy and platform.

Brian Jones – Leveraging Impact & Efficiency of Your Website

People are increasingly reliant on the Internet and email for connectivity in their daily lives. How can the church leverage its website as a greater communication and connection tool for members, guests, attendees, and the community and replace older, more costly methods of connecting? This session will explore the impact and potential of having your website be a more strategic communications tool, with greater emphasis on digital efficiencies and less emphasis on costly print and mail solutions.

Personal & Spiritual Growth

Becky Burns – Winning Through Conflict Resolution

Max Lucado said, “Conflict is inevitable, combat is optional.” Conflict itself is neither positive nor negative; it is neutral. Our response to the conflict determines which affect it has. In this workshop, you will learn how to lead and grow through conflict using biblical concepts, avoid confrontational mistakes, practice conflict's golden rules, and understand the conflict cycle to bring resolution.

Gary Milbourne – Stress Management

Stress is a reality that we all live with. The question is not how do I eliminate stress, but how do I manage it? In this session, Gary will share Biblical principles of how to manage stress effectively and how to use it to make you sharper.

Gary Milbourne – Keys to Effective Time Management

Get projects done ahead of schedule, get rid of the piles on your desk, and have time for yourself. Is all that really possible? Yes, it is! Come learn practical and effective ideas to get control of your time and your life.

Gary Milbourne – The Organized Office

Has anyone ever come into your office and the one thing they are looking for is the one thing you can't find? In this session, Gary will provide helpful tips, examples and solutions for making your office, as well as your interoffice environment, streamlined, functional and organized.

Jim Robinson – Coming Home to a Place Called Hope

Today's culture tends to equate the word “addiction” with drugs and alcohol. Singer, songwriter, author and therapist, James E. Robinson, has redefined addiction/idolatry. It is about much more than chemical dependency and involves each of us and our families. Using original songwriting, personal testimony and teaching, and powerful storytelling, this workshop will help us identify and overcome the “idols” in our lives and in the lives of those we love.

Jim Robinson – The Love Boat... A Unique Look at Families

There's one thing about families...everybody comes from one! Our unique look at Family Systems explores ways of breaking the cycle of the addiction/idolatry-related issues for current and coming generations. In this session, participants will learn the dynamics of the Addicted Family, including shame through abandonment, emotional abuse, and specific role-playing within the family unit, such as The Addict, The Hero, The Chief Enabler, The Jester, and The Lost Child. THE LOVE BOAT is an informative, often touching, and humorous workshop.

“What I liked best was learning things that are relevant to what's going on in my church right now.”

– Jennifer Lundgren
Covenant Presbyterian Church
San Antonio, TX

Vendor Showcase

PhoneTree – Church Communication that Works!

Participants will learn the importance of “engaging” their congregation through the use of today’s latest automated communication technologies. Learn when and how to properly choose between and use automated telephone, email, and text messaging.

PhoneTree – PhoneTree User Training

Already own PhoneTree? Attend this session and you’ll be on your way to becoming a “power user.” Learn tips and tricks that will save you time and make your efforts more efficient.

Kerri McDonnell – Making an IMPRESSION with Office Depot Design, Print & Ship

Office Depot offers you powerful copy and print services to help you take care of business! Your business can enjoy professional, full service copy/print, large format copy/print, binding and finishing whenever you need it. We also offer a full line of products that will look great with your business name on them! From business cards or personalized stationery, sticky notes or legal pads, we’ve got you covered.

Chris Green – Furniture with Impulse!

Office Depot offers a wide variety of seating, desks, filing and training tables either stocked for those “impulse” needs or special-ordered furniture to race your “pulse” in the excitement of having that perfect office. Let Office Depot show you how to be your own furniture designer, planner or move consultant on your next furniture project...and discover your Impulse!

John Holt – Fire Damage: Communicating a Plan for Your Church

Fire damages more than just the burned and charred areas that you can see. Furnishings, documents, electronics, and A/C systems can be permanently damaged, too! A plan of action can get your church back in operation with minimal interruption.

John Holt – Water Damage: A Quick Response

Water damage is one major cause of property damage to a facility. Flooding, fire, plumbing, sewer backups, and faulty A/C units are all causes of water losses. Professional drying and documentation of a water loss will help avoid future environmental issues and ensure safety for daily occupants.

Ken Kippes – Greening Up Your Cleaning Program

Cleaning up your facility can be performed in a more environmentally-friendly manner that can have a positive impact on your total operating expenses. An added benefit is improved indoor quality that has been proven to raise productivity and attendance.

Bill Austin – Meet, Eat, Greet & Compete in an Uncertain Economy

If you’re thinking about upgrading your facility, come learn how you can have one floor that can serve all needs. Gather for worship, dish up pot-luck, and then shoot some hoops or break out the skates!

Bill Austin – Maintenance & Safety

Two main concerns today are safety and maintenance. Learn how you can reduce the number of injuries and lower your maintenance costs. NEVER close the gym down again!

Gregg Hollenberg – Signs & Messages That Work for Churches

Communicate your vision, mission, and passion with your on-site signage. With a great design and today’s technology, your signs can be the best way for your church to communicate with parishioners, passers-by, and the community. Discover from the experts at National Signs what types of signs work best for churches and how to employ today’s LED technology to create highly effective, flexible, and impactful messages that can reach well beyond your campus.

Michael Bernstein – Save Money: Lower Your Church Electricity Costs

Every church board member would like to save the most money on their church’s electricity. TES Energy Services, LP has proven methods to offer the lowest electricity costs in Texas. Find out how we will manage the “shopping” among providers, competitive bidding, and even the paperwork - keeping your church in the lowest-cost electricity year after year.

Michael Bernstein – Lowest Residential Electricity Rates in Texas!

Your church congregants will be saving the most money on their electric bills at their homes! The CO+OP has contracted with TES Energy Services to provide access to special rates for member churches. Online signup, call center access, and personal service...find out all the details at the workshop.

Michael Bernstein – Waste Management: A Key to Budget Savings!

With over 25 years experience in the solid waste and recycling industry, US Consulting Group, brought to you by TES Energy Services, LP is now offering CO+OP members a new, money-saving service. Beginning with a review of your current waste system, USCG will offer recommendations and solutions to minimize your costs and potentially create a new recycling income stream for your church.

Shelby Systems – Best Practices Using Shelby Bank Reconciliation

This session is designed to take the Shelby Version 5 financial user who might not be using, or is having problems using, Bank Reconciliation.

Shelby Systems – Customizing Your Shelby Financial Reports

Learn how to use the custom settings in Shelby Version 5 General Ledger’s Budgeted Financial Report. Also, learn how to create a new report using General Ledger’s custom reporting tool.

Shelby Systems – Using Shelby Add-in’s With Outlook, MapPoint, and MS Word

Learn a quick and simple way to access your Shelby data from Outlook or Word. Also, learn how to hand-pick records from Shelby to pinpoint on maps with Microsoft MapPoint.

Shelby Systems – Shelby Selections and Listings... Tips & Tricks

This session is for Shelby Version 5 users who have been using Selections and Listings, but need to know some extra tricks and advanced concepts when writing specialized reports.

Dave Montgomery – EventU: Making Sense of Church Scheduling

Does it feel like constant confusion when it comes to keeping up with all the meetings, Bible studies, classes and worship gatherings? This workshop will present an option that will make scheduling the endless number of events that occur each week more manageable, and help you regain your sanity when it comes to maintaining your church calendar.

Dave Montgomery – TransactU: Online Donations & Registrations

In a world that is constantly looking for more options in everything, it only makes sense to provide easier ways to sign up and pay for events, as well as contribute to the ongoing ministries of the church. This workshop will give you insight into how to make online donations and registrations easy and convenient.

Schedule

7:30 - 8:30 Registrations, Coffee, Continental Breakfast

8:30 - 8:45 Vendor Door Prize Kick-off & Welcome

9:00 - 10:15 Session A Workshops

Mobile Ministry

Section 125: Why Pay More Taxes Than Necessary? (R)
 Vision and Mission: Divide or Conquer (R)
 Ten Things You Don't Want Your Auditor to Find (R)
 To Expense or Not Expense... That is the Question! (R)
 The Clarity Zone: Discovering God's Unique Call (R)
 Leadership at Every Level (R)
 Integrated Church Marketing & Communications Plan
 Stress Management (R)
 Coming Home To A Place Called Hope (R)
 Making Outlook Work For You: Tips & Tricks (R)
 Greening Up Your Cleaning Program (V) (R)
 Fire Damage: Communicating a Plan For Your Church (V) (R)
 Branding 101: Communicating Vision Visually (R)
 Meet, Eat, Greet & Compete in an Uncertain Economy (V) (R)
 How to Advance Your Leadership Potential (R)
 Pastoral Leadership During a Crisis (R)
 Save Money: Lower Your Church Electricity Costs! (V)
 Website Relevancy (R)
 Making an IMPRESSION with
 Office Depot Design, Print & Ship (V) (R)
 Signs & Messages That Work for Churches (V) (R)
 TransactU: Online Donations & Registrations (V) (R)
 Best Practices Using Shelby Bank Reconciliation (V)

Speaker

Doug Reed, Chris Green,
 James Hornstra
 Kevin Whitney
 Becky Burns
 John Ratliff
 Ann Williams
 Will Mancini
 Michael Euliss
 Yvon Prehn
 Gary Milbourne
 Jim Robinson
 Randy Hamilton
 Ken Kippes
 S. John Holt
 Cheryl Marting
 Bill Austin
 Dr. Stephen Trammell
 Dr. John Ogletree
 Michael Bernstein
 Brian Jones
 Kerri McDonnell
 Gregg Hollenberg
 Dave Montgomery
 Shelby Systems

10:15 - 10:30 Coffee & Snack Break

10:30 - 11:45 Session B Workshops

To Mac or Not to Mac

Section 125: Why Pay More Taxes Than Necessary? (R)
 Engaging Servant Potential: Building a Volunteer Ministry
 Ten Things You Don't Want Your Auditor to Find (R)
 To Expense or Not Expense... That is the Question! (R)
 The Clarity Zone: Discovering God's Unique Call (R)
 Leadership at Every Level (R)
 A Communication Plan to Accomplish Your Mission
 The Organized Office
 The Love Boat... A Unique Look at Families
 Making Outlook Work For You: Tips & Tricks (R)
 Marketing Without Money
 Greening Up Your Cleaning Program (V) (R)
 Fire Damage: Communicating a Plan For Your Church (V) (R)
 Branding 101: Communicating Vision Visually (R)
 Background Screening: A Policy for Your Church (V) (R)
 How to Advance Your Leadership Potential (R)
 Pastoral Leadership During a Crisis (R)
 Leveraging Impact & Efficiency of Your Website
 Furniture With Impulse! (V)
 Getting the Most from Communication Technology (V)
 Signs & Messages That Work for Churches (V) (R)
 Customizing Your Shelby Financial Reports (V)

Speaker

Doug Reed, Chris Green,
 James Hornstra
 Kevin Whitney
 Becky Burns
 John Ratliff
 Ann Williams
 Will Mancini
 Michael Euliss
 Yvon Prehn
 Gary Milbourne
 Jim Robinson
 Randy Hamilton
 Jeff Crilley
 Ken Kippes
 John Holt
 Cheryl Marting
 Kevin Conrad
 Dr. Stephen Trammell
 Dr. John Ogletree
 Brian Jones
 Chris Green
 Casey Bryant, Mike Jones
 Gregg Hollenberg
 Shelby Systems

11:50 - 12:15 Eat & Meet with Vendors in Family Life Center (FLC)

12:15 - 12:30 Special Recognition

12:30 - 1:15 Keynote & Special Music - Prodigal Song

1:15 - 1:30 Announcements & Grand Prize

1:45 - 3:00 Session C Workshops

Motivation Through Teambuilding
 HRA's and HSA's: What's the Difference?
 Winning Through Conflict Resolution
 Professional Services/GAAP Financial Statements (R)
 Are We Really Reconciling Our Bank Statements? (R)
 Simplementation: A 'Less is More' Approach to Ministry
 PhoneTree User Training (V)
 Design Strategies to Help You Communicate Effectively
 Keys to Effective Time Management
 The Love Boat... A Unique Look at Families (R)
 Today's Technology Threats: Internet to Email (R)
 Marketing Without Money (R)
 Water Damage: A Quick Response (V) (R)
 Unleash Your Team's Potential (R)
 Hiring Practices That Keep You Out of Court (R)
 Background Screening: A Policy for Your Church (V) (R)
 Lowest Residential Electricity Rates in Texas! (V)
 Website Relevancy (R)
 Furniture With Impulse! (V) (R)
 Signs & Messages That Work for Churches (V) (R)
 EventU: Making Sense of Church Scheduling (V)
 Shelby Selections & Listings: Tips & Tricks (V)

Speaker

Doug Reed
 Kevin Whitney
 Becky Burns
 John Ratliff
 Ann Williams
 Will Mancini
 PhoneTree
 Yvon Prehn
 Gary Milbourne
 Jim Robinson
 Randy Hamilton
 Jeff Crilley
 John Holt
 Cheryl Marting
 Richard R. Brann
 Kevin Conrad
 Michael Bernstein
 Brian Jones
 Chris Green
 Gregg Hollenberg
 Dave Montgomery
 Shelby Systems

3:00 - 3:15 Snack Break

3:15 - 4:30 Session D Workshops

Cool Technology Stuff
 HRA's and HSA's: What's the Difference? (R)
 Vision and Mission: Divide or Conquer (R)
 Professional Services/GAAP Financial Statements
 Are We Really Reconciling Our Bank Statements? (R)
 Church Communication That Works (V)
 Creating a Free Church Website
 Stress Management (R)
 Coming Home to a Place Called Hope (R)
 Today's Technology Threats: Internet to Email (R)
 Water Damage: A Quick Response (V) (R)
 Unleash Your Team's Potential (R)
 Hiring Practices That Keep You Out of Court (R)
 Maintenance & Safety
 Waste Management: A Key to Budget Savings! (V)
 Leveraging Impact & Efficiency of Your Website (R)
 Making an IMPRESSION with
 Office Depot Design, Print & Ship (V) (R)
 Signs & Messages That Work for Churches (V) (R)
 TransactU: Online Donations & Registrations (V) (R)
 Using Shelby Add-ins in Outlook, MapPoint & Word (V)

Speaker

Doug Reed, Chris Green,
 James Hornstra
 Kevin Whitney
 Becky Burns
 John Ratliff
 Ann Williams
 PhoneTree
 Yvon Prehn
 Gary Milbourne
 Jim Robinson
 Randy Hamilton
 John Holt
 Cheryl Marting
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Session C: 1:45 - 3:00

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Session D: 3:15 - 4:30

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Session A Workshops

10:15 - 10:30

Coffee & Snack Break

10:30 - 11:45

Session B Workshops

11:50 - 12:15

Meet with Vendors
& Eat in Family Life Center

12:15 - 12:30

Special Recognition

12:30 - 1:15

Keynote & Special Music

1:15 - 1:30

Announcements & Grand Prize

1:45 - 3:00

Session C Workshops

3:00 - 3:15

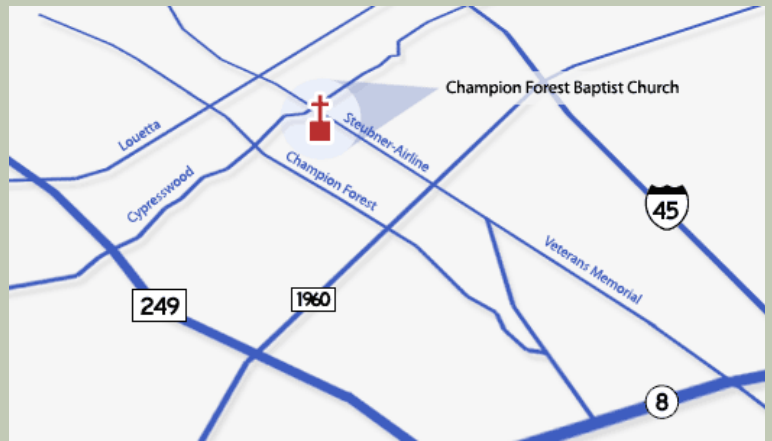
Snack Break

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Session D Workshops

4:30 - 4:45

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Together We Serve...

By Michael Euliss

As long as I can remember, I have been fascinated by effective teams. As a young person, I watched the 1972-1974 North Carolina State Wolfpack basketball team as they went 57-1 over the course of two years. This culminated with a win over UCLA, ending the Bruins' seven-year streak of national championships, and another win over Marquette to win the NCAA National Championship in 1974. How could a team be so good and win so many games? This near-perfect performance was made possible by each member bringing something different to the team, as well as the team acknowledging these differences and placing value in them.

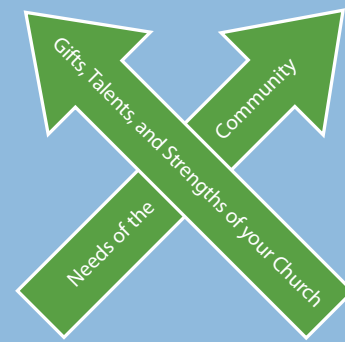


Let's take a look at the members of the starting five and examine what made this team phenomenal. Playing center was 7' 4" Tom Burleson. Not only was he very tall, but he was fundamentally sound. Many people that size are awkward, but not Tom. He was strong, talented, and one year older than the rest. In sharp contrast to him was a 5' 7" point guard, Monte Towe. Towe, who now serves as the Wolfpack's assistant coach, was the catalyst for many of the offensive plays. Whether he was swishing from 30+ feet away, feeding the ball to Burleson for an easy hook shot, or lofting the ball high in the air for 6' 4" David Thompson to catch and lay in the basket while in mid-air (invention of the Alley-Oop), Towe made things happen. This trio was completed by Thompson who was arguably the best player college basketball has ever seen. David Thompson was a player who was accurate from anywhere on the court, was slick as glass, and had a 48" vertical leap allowing him to be nicknamed "Skywalker." He was Michael Jordan's role model. The other two starters, Mo Rivers (guard) and Tim Stoddard (forward) perfectly complimented the other three. They all realized they had roles to play in order for the team to be successful. Burleson understood his job as a 7' 4" center and did not try to play Towe's point guard role and vice-versa.

What does this have to do with the church? The local church makes up a "team" – God's team – whose mission is not to win basketball games, but to win souls. There are some subtle differences, however. With college basketball there are a number of people who try out, a number that are recruited and asked to join. But, there are only a small number who actually make the team. In church, we recruit constantly, but all who ask make the team. Each of these teams is just as capable of winning as the '74 Wolfpack if we handle our team correctly. Then, understand and play our roles, through God, to the best of our ability.

Each team needs a leader. Not just any leader, but a spiritual leader. A leader of God's team must be first concerned with vision. Proverbs 29:18 tells us that "Where there is no vision, the people perish." (KJV) This divine vision provided to the spiritual leader must be conveyed to the congregation routinely for it to become their calling as well. Instead of using the word "perish," one translation, The Message, says "If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves." With no clear sense of vision, your team is free to go in any direction. Put another way, if you are clear as to where you are now, and you understand the basic purpose of the church as a whole, this vision is the "how" you are going to get there.

My long-time friend, Reverend Beth Crissman, explains this vision for your church as the intersection of the gifts, talents, and strengths of your church with the needs of the community in which it serves.



After visioning, we must clearly understand the dynamics of building a team. Psychologist Bruce Tuckman observed in the 1960's that all teams go through the same basic four stages. Forming, storming, norming, then performing. Beth gives this great fit to ministry in her book, [Longing to Belong](#).



The local church makes up a "team" – God's team – whose mission is not to win basketball games, but to win souls.

Forming happens in many ways. It happens at Wednesday night suppers, fellowship events, and other times when we get to know each other. This is where we begin to learn of each others' strengths, views, opinions, wishes, needs, and desires.

Storming is inevitable. This is where our views, opinions, wishes, needs, and desires do not mesh or come in conflict with our teammates'. Unfortunately, this is where many teams get stuck. They fail to handle the conflict according to scripture and end up going in circles. Many times the focus then changes to the conflict and not on God's calling.

Norming takes place following the storming, provided we survive it. This is where the team decides what it is about and just as important, what it is not about. Part of this process is understanding the gifts, talents, and strengths of those on our team. Once we do this, we can move to performing.

Performing is where we are moving from the "good things" to the "God Things." It is where, as Olympic runner Eric Liddel put it, "I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure." When we are doing the "God Things," we feel His pleasure, not just ours.

One of the challenges in the norming phase is understanding the gifts and talents of your team. Just like the Wolfpack, each

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member brought something unique. The members not only recognized that, but celebrated it and used it to paint a much bigger picture than they ever could individually. But how does a leader go about understanding a team's gifts, talents, and strengths? First, an initial assessment is needed - a "check up" of the vital signs of the church. There are a number of good instruments from which we can understand this measurement. Churches should be cautious not to be cavalier about these. Seek the assistance of someone who understands how to administer, understand, and apply these tools.

From these assessments, we begin to see our people in a new light. We may have many "centers" that are playing "guard" on our team today, making us less effective than we could be. Put another way, we may have people in our church volunteering in the kitchen who are gifted evangelists or teachers. Why are they in the kitchen? It is because we routinely grab anyone who can "fog a mirror" and put them to work where there is need. This works for the short term. The biggest problem is that this person often gets stuck there, or "typecast" and we never realize their full potential.

A good leader then takes these gifts, and plugs them in where there is a fit – similar to assembling a puzzle that makes a beautiful picture when complete. When your members are operating in congruence with their strengths, they not only perform better, but they learn quicker and are truly satisfied with what they are doing. Like the teacher in the kitchen. They may be very good at the kitchen only because they are doing what is needed. If this role is not in congruence with their strengths, they will probably tell you that they don't mind doing it, but would rather do something else given the opportunity. If you look closely, there is probably someone who is a better fit for that kitchen role.

Recognize that your church is a dynamic environment which changes as people come and go. Any time you add a new member to a team or take one away, the formation process

starts over. You can accelerate the process by having a clear vision in place and by understanding these principles. Looking back at that Wolfpack team, you can see this happen. Following the 1974 season, Tom Bureson graduated, leaving Towe and Thompson behind as rising seniors. The team struggled with roles and never filled the void left by Bureson. They continued to operate as if he was still there. You may have heard this term in your church – "That's the way we've always done it." Consequently, they did not return to national prominence until 1983.

If the local church is God's team, then our CO+OP is a part of God's league. Think about each church being like a player on a team. Each church brings their collective gifts, talents, and strengths to the table to work together, not compete with each other to accomplish the mission of winning souls. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 tells us "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."(NIV)

As we become intertwined, always remember that the third strand in that verse represents Jesus Christ. When we put our collective gifts, talents, and strengths together for His purpose, then and only then can we truly serve. ✨

Michael Euliss



Michael Euliss is a certified congregational health specialist and a Gallup® field faith advisor. He has served church leadership for more than three decades and can be reached at michael@euliss.com.

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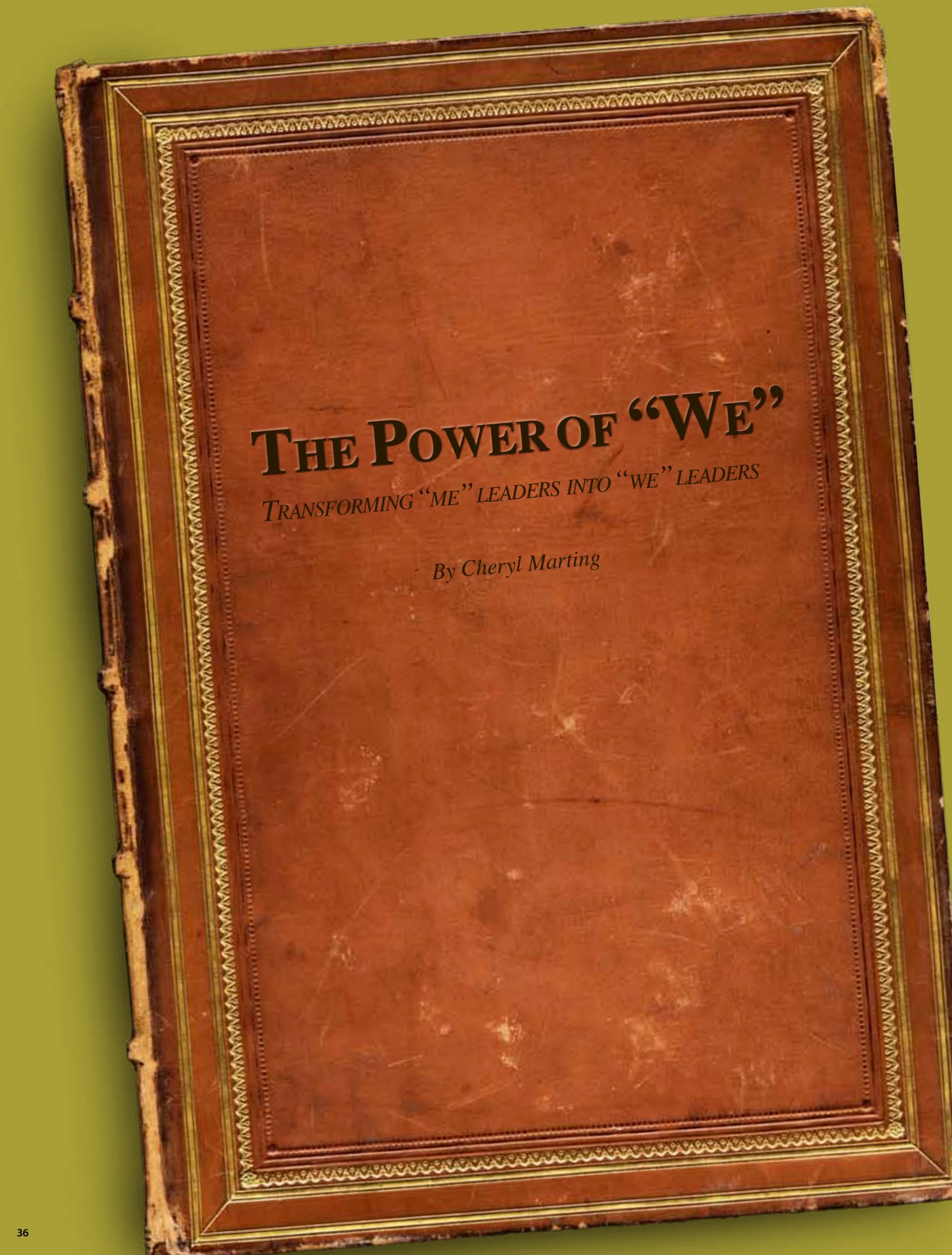
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THE POWER OF “WE”
TRANSFORMING “ME” LEADERS INTO “WE” LEADERS

By Cheryl Marting

What is it about that organization that makes them great?

You feel it when you walk down the halls. You hear it in the voices of the staff as they talk about their week over coffee at Starbucks. You see it in the enthusiasm they bring to their roles every day. You sense it in how they collaborate every day. What is different here?

Great organizations are healthy organizations that, across the board, have two primary characteristics in common. Dee Hock, founder of Visa Corporation, in *The Birth of the Chaordic Age* states that the strength and reality of every organization lies in the sense of community of the people who have been attracted to it combined with clarity of a shared purpose and common principles. In *Church Unique*, clarity evangelist Will Mancini poignantly reminds us that clear vision creates culture, community and catalyzes organizations. The common premise found in these two compelling leadership books is that community and shared vision are the foundation for developing teams that exude a distinctiveness in performance and spirit.

One of my favorite movies that brings this to reality is *The Return of the King*. We see diverse groups come together around a united purpose to form one community while celebrating the differences and gifts that each brings to the mission. Think of how Legolas, the elf archer, was always watching Aragorn's back while offering honest challenge and push along the way. Think of the reluctant Hobbit, Sam, sharing Frodo's burden of carrying the ring to its destruction. Our missions may not be as epic, but they certainly make an impact in redemptive history!

How can we take a collection of individuals from being *Me Leaders* – it's all about me and my goals to be *We Leaders* – it's all about our shared vision as a team. It begins with building a team climate that embraces leadership development, mutual support, effective and prompt conflict resolution and a strong identity driven by a clearly stated mission.

After spending a day with an "on mission" client several weeks ago for a team building session, I remarked about the good sense of trust and collaboration among the staff. The executive pastor replied, "Oh, we have our moments! Everyone knows that if a door is slammed or attitudes simmer behind closed doors, the door to their office is removed!" Some of you may be thinking that is extreme – but it is done in a loving way that is appreciated by the staff. The level of open communication

and trust that exists allows for challenge that keeps team connectivity more important than one person's agenda. The levity that action brings opens the door, so to speak, for purposeful dialogue to occur.

Getting to Know You

One characteristic of strong community is the recognition and celebration of the uniqueness of each person on the team and the value that each brings to the organization. The first step toward achieving this is to employ a personality assessment tool. Patrick Lencioni, in *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, highlights the value of these reports when he states, "Such tools break down barriers by allowing people to better understand and empathize with one another." But it goes beyond that. The benefits of integrating a temperament profile into your leadership culture are that you empower your team to grow in community as you:

- Build trust
- Catalyze transparency and allows for healthy conflict
- Build an understanding of differences
- Promote the value of all teammate's input
- Equip for sharing vision and goals
- Align teams for attention and results

Results. Isn't that what we are looking for?

Many organizations, including churches have been introduced to various assessment tools. That is good. Typically, however, there is a lack of implementation and integration into the culture of the organization. The value of the information is typically pushed onto a shelf never to be revisited again.

Take it off the shelf

Teams that commit to allocating time at least quarterly for dialogue and team building are empowered in ways that strengthen organizational alignment. By acknowledging the strengths, weaknesses, contribution and communication style or ourselves and our teammates, we can work on the following steps to empowerment:

- Develop an Awareness of Self
- Develop an Awareness of Others
- Develop a pattern of Adapting our behaviors in order to...
- Align as a Team

You mean it's not all about me? Well, no, but it is about "we."

Let's take a look at one way that applying personality profile results can provide immediate returns. Organizations reap enormous benefit by investing in training to improve everyday communication and collaboration. Have you experienced or observed the team getting stuck because individual's wires got crossed? How about this scenario? Rick, the Senior Pastor encounters Jenny, the children's director in the hall and says, with hands on his hips, "Everyone else ready for Sunday afternoon. Are you yet?"

Do you sense that hot buttons may be pushed here? However unintentionally, we operate from our "me" default communication style without regard to the other individual's internal pulse and wiring. Let's drill down into how conflict, emotional reactions and communication misfires begin and how you and your team can develop positive communication patterns that will result in "we" thinking.





How wires get crossed

Each of us enters into relationships with a dominant "wiring," or behavioral predisposition, that can be discovered using a personality assessment tool. This "wiring" predisposes us to interaction patterns that operate from a myopic perspective.

We inadvertently sabotage our mission because we communicate with egocentric blinders. A brief overview can help us understand the difference among four general "wiring" categories and how these affect communication style. Getting a handle on these and applying a few simple tips can enhance relationships and deliver a positive effect on your organization.

The chart below summarizes characteristics of each of the four basic types. Notice that general behavioral styles exist for each of the colorful personalities. Studying these can give us an understanding of our co-workers and how we communicate—speak and listen—with one another. For example, a Fiery Red is quick, to the point and results oriented. An Earth Green processes information before responding and is more concerned with people than with results and tasks.

Think back to the conversation between Rick and Jenny. What color preference do you think the senior pastor was? The children's director? You have probably assessed that the pastor was a Fiery Red—results focused, non-emotional, his body language in a demanding position. He was not intending to hurt or offend—he was merely asking a question in his assertive style while planning the week. What was Jenny, an Earth Green, feeling when he said that? "He's not at

	ENERGIZING BEHAVIORS	BEHAVIORAL FOCUS	COMMUNICATION STYLE
FIERY RED 	Talk to think Task Oriented Initiator	Competitive Demanding Strong-willed Purposeful	Direct Non-emotive
SUNSHINE YELLOW 	Talks to think People oriented Initiator	Sociable Demonstrative Enthusiastic Persuasive	Direct Emotive
EARTH GREEN 	Think to talk People Oriented Processor	Caring Encouraging Sharing Patient	Indirect Emotive
COOL BLUE 	Thinks to talk Task oriented Processor	Cautious Precise Deliberate Questioning	Indirect Non-emotive

all concerned about me or my ministry – just the bottom line. He is so difficult!” How might this situation be improved? What if before Rick checked in with Jenny, he stopped to think that she may need more relationship and conversation that addressed why her contribution was going to be beneficial. What if Jenny kept in mind that Rick thinks fast and appreciates her contribution but does not feel the need to affirm? What if they each simply took time to understand one another?

Remember the 4 A's: awareness of ourselves, awareness of others, adapting to serve in order to align as a team. Teams that take time to engage in intentional, authentic dialogue that is based in an understanding of one another's strengths, weaknesses and needs develop collaborative cultures that transcend individual differences. They put aside personal agendas and appreciate the value of each person's gifts and unique contributions.

Our goal is to create community whose focus is on a shared vision. And always keep in mind that together “we” will accomplish far more than “me.” A significant by-product of learning to adapt our behavior to serve our teammates is that we grow individually into the best God intended us to be.

Getting together

Take a minute to think about your wiring. Now think about your co-workers. What color are you? Your co-workers?

Employ a respected and user-friendly personality assessment tool as your resource, then carve out some time to have each person answer these questions and share their answers with the rest of the team.

1. What is my communications style?
2. What do I need from you when you communicate with me?
3. What can I do to adapt to communicate better with each member on my team?

Be honest, feel free to affirm and challenge—and have fun! See what can happen in your ministry when you take the time to develop community! ✨

Cheryl Marting



Cheryl Marting is Chief Connections Officer for Auxano, a national consulting group whose mission is to guide leaders through growth challenges with vision and clarify. Cheryl can be reached at cheryl@visiontogrow.com.

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by Kevin Whitney

Section 125 Cafeteria Plans

Why should an employer install a 125 Plan?

A Section 125 Cafeteria Plan can provide immediate savings to the employees in terms of benefits. It will also provide a payroll tax reduction to the employer.

The first savings is to employees and relates to the premiums that they are paying out of each paycheck. If the group doesn't have a 125 plan in place, the employees are paying for premiums with AFTER tax dollars, which costs the employee an additional 25% on average (7.65% FICA and 18% Federal Income, plus any state income tax). This means that for every \$100 of premium, the employee must earn \$125 to pay for the premium. Twenty-five dollars of that goes to the government in the form of income and FICA taxes. If the 125 Plan is installed, that additional money does not have to be earned. The employee pays \$100 for \$100 of benefit. This allows the employee to increase their take home pay without the employer having to increase their pay. The second savings is to the employer and relates to payroll taxes that have to be matched. For every dollar of income the employee pays 7.65% FICA on, it has to be matched by the employer. However, if the employee pre-taxes premiums and saves the FICA on those dollars, the employer will also save the FICA. In most instances, the 125 Plan can be properly added to a company at no additional cost since those FICA savings offset any added plan costs.

The third savings is also the employee's and relates to their recurring out-of-pocket expenses. A 125 Plan allows the establishment of Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA). There are three basic types of accounts. An FSA for unreimbursed medical, dental or vision expenses (Flex-Med) allows an employee to set aside money on a pre-tax basis and cover common out-of-pocket expenses. A Dependent Care Assistance Program (Flex-Care) allows for child care or adult care expenses to be pre-taxed. A Premium Spending Account (Flex-Premium) allows for individual health coverage to be pre-taxed. Any of these accounts can increase the benefit plan and help keep employees satisfied. However, all three accounts are "use it or lose it," since IRS rules require that all funds be used up during the year or are forfeited back to the employer.

Premium Only Plan (POP)

What should be installed? Without fail, almost all companies need to have, at the minimum, a Premium Only Plan (POP). A POP will allow employees to save taxes on their premiums for group medical, dental or vision. It will also allow ancillary products, like most AFLAC or Colonial products, to be pre-taxed. Group Term life can also be allowed to be pre-taxed, but only up to \$50,000 of benefit, including any employer-purchased life. Short Term and Long Term Disability can also be pre-taxed, but if the premium is tax-free, the benefit is taxed. So, it is advisable to post-tax both STD and LTD benefits.

Full Flex Plan

The next step, beyond a POP, is to install a full Flex plan. This would include the POP and FSA's. Each group decides which spending accounts are to be offered. Most offer both Flex-Med and Flex-Care, but very few offer Flex-Premium. Flex-Care has a federally set limit of \$5,000 annual per family. Flex-Premium has no set limit and Flex-Med has a limit set by each individual employer. Both Flex-Care and Flex-Premium are no-risk plans to employers, as the employee is only able to withdraw up to what they have already accrued in the plan.

Flex Med Plan

Flex-Med is different. Flex-Med allows an employee to withdraw up to their full annual pledge from the very start, regardless of how much the employee has accrued in the plan. This can be very beneficial to employees who are looking to have LASIK or Orthodontia. Since they can tap into the fund for their full amount, they can incur the expense and receive a tax-free, interest-free loan from their employer. The account is also useful for those with recurring, budgetable expenses. Items like prescriptions, co-pays, dental visits, eye glasses or contacts can be pre-taxed and give the employee a 25% discount on all of those expenses.

The drawback to employers, besides having to pay out more than they have taken in from a particular employee early in the year, is that if the employee leaves, they are not able to recoup the overage from the employee's last pay check. The reason is that the IRS has imposed risk to both parties. The risk to the employee is use-it-or-lose-it and the risk to the employer is an employee who uses it and leaves. Risk is applied to both parties because both parties benefit from tax savings. The employee saves their tax bracket, plus FICA, and the employer saves FICA on all dollars that are pre-taxed. In most cases, the risk to both parties is truly minimal. For the employer, the tax savings offset most of the losses the plan might incur by overspent accounts. Residuals in the rest of the accounts can be used to help balance the losses as well. For the employee, the tax savings realized should offset most, if not all, of any losses by funds left in the plan. In general, a full Flex plan can be a great cost saver to both the employee and employer.

How do you keep your plan compliant?

Section 125 Plans require four pieces to stay compliant with IRS regulations. However, these pieces need only to be kept on file, not submitted to the IRS. The first and second pieces are the Plan Document and Summary Plan Description. The Plan Document outlines the rules of operation, defines the eligible benefits, and names the key parties in association with the Plan. The Summary Plan Description is the piece that puts the legal verbiage into simpler language for the employee. It has to be made available to all employees participating in the 125 Plan. The third piece is a copy of all the salary reduction agreements for all participating employees. These need to be kept on file to prove that the employee has authorized the reduction in their salary. The final piece, and the one most POP plans miss, is a copy of the non-discrimination testing. The testing ensures that the key employees are not taking an unfair advantage in the plan by pre-taxing more than they are legally allowed. All Plans

must have all of the above information on file. If the church is ever audited by the IRS, the 125 Plan will be reviewed. Missing any of the above information could cause the plan to be disqualified back to the inception, costing the employer all of the back taxes, late fees, interest and penalties on all of the pre-taxed dollars. This could run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars for any plan that has been in effect for more than a couple of years.

In general, a 125 Plan is simple to set up and maintain if the employer takes the time to do it right. There are ancillary providers who will do 125 Plans for free, but do they always do all of the necessary parts to ensure compliance? That is left to be determined. My advice would be to find a Third Party Administrator (TPA) who does the administration and pay a little to have the peace of mind of knowing that your 125 Plan is compliant. +

Kevin Whitney

Kevin is co-worker and Chief Operating Officer of Flexible Benefit Group, Inc. (FBG), a third-party administrator specializing in Section 125 (Cafeteria), Health Savings Account (HSA), Healthcare Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) and Medical Expense Reimbursement Plans (MERP). Contact Kevin at kwhitney@flexiblebenefitgroup.com.

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Alphabetical Listing

2GETAWAY Travel/FaithJourneys *Page 15*

Accurate Air Systems /

Comfort Systems USA *Page 33*

American Business Machines *Page 39*

Ark Construction *Page 35*

Blackmon Mooring *Page 39*

Carlson Roofing Co., Inc. *Page 29*

Church Interiors of Texas *Page 42*

CleanCare, Inc.

included in Hillyard ad *Page 8*

Comerica Bank *Page 2*

Covenant Eyes, Inc. *Page 20*

Creative Coffee, Inc. *Page 33*

Complete Security

Investigations, LLC *Page 9*

DataVox Business

Communications *Page 29*

DeBow Lock & Safe *Page 9*

Educational Products, Inc. *Page 15*

Ernest Ideas Design &

Media Group *Page 20*

HD Supply *Page 7*

Hillyard, Inc. *Page 8*

Insurance One Agency *Page 41*

Integrity Furniture & Equipment *Page 8*

IT Fidelity *Page 8*

Logical Control Services, LLP *Page 35*

Mity-Lite Tables & Chairs *Page 42*

National Signs *Page 48*

Office Depot Business Solutions

Division *Page 30*

PhoneTree *Page 9*

Professional Janitorial Service

of Houston *Page 7*

RISO, Inc. *Page 5*

Sysco/PointSource *Page 42*

TES Energy, Inc. *Page 47*

Tell People You Know *Page 15*

Upright Ministries *Page 7*

U-Save Energy *Page 5*

Vector Concepts *Page 29*

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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:

- office supplies
- insurance
- electricity
- janitorial and sanitation supplies and tools
- banking
- roofing and construction
- food service
- plumbing
- security systems
- printing
- signs
- furniture and equipment
- copiers and duplicators
- janitorial service
- HVAC resources
- maintenance, repair parts and tools
- lamps and electrical supplies
- disaster recovery and carpet cleaning
- coffee service
- locksmith service
- travel planning and ticketing
- architect and design/build services
- telephone and equipment services
- advertising and graphic design services
- merchant account services
- online event registration and payments
- IT services and equipment
- congregational messaging tools and services
- internet accountability tools
- church consulting
- background screening

Vendors with a national presence include:

- Blackmon Mooring
- Mity-Lite
- Church Interiors
- National Signs
- Comerica Bank
- Office Depot
- Comfort Systems / Accurate Air
- PhoneTree
- Covenant Eyes
- RISO, Inc.
- Complete Security Investigations
- Tech Depot
- Hillyard
- Upright Ministries
- Insurance One

How to participate: Join online at www.churchco-op.org or phone 888.350.3264 to enroll.

Participating member with National Association of Church Business Administration and local chapters in Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston and San Antonio.



20+
YEARS
...AND COUNTING
CHURCH SUPPLIES & SERVICES INC.





TES Energy Services, LP presents:

Lowering Your Electricity Costs at Your Church!



A Proud New CO+OP Vendor!

TES Energy Services, LP will negotiate the lowest cost electricity contract for your Church facilities!

✓ ***Why are electricity prices being quoted at 3 year lows both for residential and commercial!***

With a simple Letter of Authorization (LOA) our team of energy experts will go to work to offer you an honest, "apples to apples" comparison of savings among providers.

We will present your organization with an "indicative price" based on a broad spectrum of strategies and pricing models that match your energy goals.

✓ ***Individual Attention***

By customizing a provider's contract terms to fit their buying strategies, TES Energy Services, LP has significantly added value to many of our property managers' portfolios.

✓ ***Relationship with Providers***

Placing over 2 billion KWH, we have great buying power and very strong, positive relationships with all Texas Retail Electric Providers.

✓ ***Market Timing***

Today's marketplace is a fast changing, commodity-based playing field. We are constantly monitoring the marketplace - "every hour" - for buying patterns, enabling you to focus on your specific business issues.

✓ ***Competitive Negotiations***

TES Energy Services, LP brings the providers that are interested in your specific needs into a "Hot Box" to push the price down.

Once your "Strike Price" has been negotiated, then you are presented with one or more contracts and strategies to choose from.

✓ ***As Your Consultant***

As your consultant, we will represent you for any issues in the future with your contracted provider (billings, meters etc.).

TES Energy Services, LP will bid your church's electricity among these low cost providers!



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