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Growing Healthy
Inside and Out



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(210) 220-6996

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Lois Brorsen



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Too often, play time is cut out to make room for all of the other areas of our lives we need to manage.

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

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



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From the Director

Recently we were visiting some good friends who own a horse ranch in central Texas. It was a beautiful Saturday and we decided to head to the historical town of Granbury for a little bit of shopping. When we arrived, we realized they were having a wine festival, which meant many of the stores were handing out samples of wine, crackers, snacks and fresh fruit.

As we entered one store, a perfect chocolate-dipped strawberry caught the attention of my eye—medium sized, red, plump, and dipped in dark chocolate with white chocolate stripes.

The sales person noticed the look on my face, picked up the platter of strawberries, and said to me, "Have a perfectly dipped gourmet strawberry that you will never forget." She was right... I will never forget it because the moment I took a big bite of it I realized that as beautiful as it was on the outside, the inside was rotten and distasteful. I found the nearest garbage container and tossed the strawberry. I do not know if that strawberry was rotten due to overwatering, staying on the stem too long, or just being neglected.

That strawberry reminded me of what our ministries can be like if we don't keep them healthy from the inside out. We can have beautiful buildings and well-kept lawns that look healthy, but may not be so on the inside. We may have what appears to be a great staff, but one that is dysfunctional due to lack of clear communication.

This is a great time of year to step back and take a good look inside our ministries. Healthy facilities are not held together with duct tape according to Tim Cool: you can read more about that on page 32. Dianne Davenport brings another perspective on growing healthy inside out through her true story beginning on page 9.

Find your favorite place to read and take a few minutes to see what many are saying about the 2014 Texas Ministry Conference. Learn more about ways to conserve water and grow healthy landscaping from our new vendor, WaterLogic, on page 42. Don't miss our other articles on ways you can make your ministry safer and healthier, including an understanding of the value of play, page 36.

Let's join together as we make our ministries healthier from the inside out!

Patti Malott
Executive Director



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rbarnett@cfbc.org

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pburns@insuranceoneagency.com

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cdalehendrix@icloud.com

Jeff Nuckols

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jeff.nuckols@frostbank.com

Robert Painter

Painter Law Firm PLLC, Houston, TX
rpainter@painterfirm.com

Taunya Painter

Painter Law Firm PLLC, Houston, TX
tpainter@painterfirm.com

Doug Reed

BEMA Information Technologies, Houston, TX
doug.reed@bemaservices.com

Dave Thomas

St. Luke's Episcopal Church, San Antonio, TX
davidt@stlukes-sa.net

CO+OP Member & Vendor Relations

www.churchco-op.org
888.350.3264 | 832.478.5131

Charlotte Hughes

charlottehughes@churchco-op.org | 832.256.0523

Dan Bishop

danbishop@churchco-op.org | 281.382.3469

Leslie Gawthorp

lesliegawthorp@churchco-op.org | 512.775.3490

Production

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Patti Malott
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Editor

Grace Bishop
Houston, Texas, 832.478.5131

Printer

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Dallas, Texas, 214.528.2622

NACBA

National Association of Church Business Administration 2014 Chapter Contact Info

Alamo Chapter – San Antonio

Contact: Dave Thomas, 210.828.6425
davidt@stlukes-sa.net
www.nacbaalamo.org

Texas Capital Area Chapter - Austin

Contact: Marshall Smith 512.476.2625
msmith@fbcaustin.org

Dallas Chapter #1

Contact: Greg Humphries 972.771.5500
ghumphries@fumcrokwall.com
www.nacbadallas.org

Fort Worth Chapter

Contact: Leonard Harris, 817.295.2221
lharris@fbcburleson.com
www.gfwnacba.org

Houston Metro Chapter

Contact: Harry Fritzenschaft, 713.869.9070
harry@houstonvineyard.org
www.nacbahouston.org

For more information on a Chapter meeting in your area, or on the 2014 National Conference, visit www.nacba.net

NACFM

National Association of Church Facilities Managers 2014 Chapter Contact Info

Contacts:

Jeff Galasso, 303.210.6911, Vice President
vicepresident@nacfm.com

Rick Burdon, 713.303.0319, President
president@nacfm.com

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we've got you covered

by Gary Benson

Four Common Diagnosed Shortcomings

There are many facets to maintaining a healthy ministry, and obviously a proper insurance program is one of those. But before insurance, keeping your ministry safe may well be accomplished through proper planning and proper policies and procedures. Like any organization, a church needs to stay organized to run efficiently, and following clear day-to-day standards will aid in that process.

Please note that we are not suggesting that a church develop a series of policies and procedures and then find them just sitting on the shelf. Instead, developing clear but simple policies that are communicated to the staff and volunteers—and reviewed often—will begin to make them an integral part of what you do. And that will in turn reduce key areas of potential risk and could go a long way toward making your ministry safer and healthier.

Here are four key areas we find often overlooked.

Employee Manual

Even good employees will make mistakes or could misunderstand rules that are communicated just verbally. A church should establish its employee policies and procedures in writing. Within a well-designed church employee handbook, your HR policies will be clear and consistent, the chance of misunderstanding or frustration among staff will be lowered, the ministry will be offered protection, and your pastors and leaders will be equipped with a good HR resource. While no employee handbook should be copied entirely from a template, that may be a good place to start if you find it helpful.

Transportation Policy

Does your church have a clearly defined plan outlining (a) vehicle use policies, including driver guidelines and a description of acceptable vehicles; (b) non-owned driver guidelines for those not driving church-owned vehicles, but still driving on behalf of the church; and (c) charter transportation guidelines for when the church might charter transportation by bus or air?

Transporting individuals is one of the most hazardous activities that churches undertake, and it's a privilege many take for granted. But it can also be one of the largest litigious areas you experience, so by following simple principles, the church may reduce its liability exposure.

Facility Use Policy

Churches often receive requests from outside groups to use their facilities. In many cases, churches own large facilities but do not utilize them every day or every moment of the day, so by allowing others to use them, they develop the sense of being good neighbors in their community. You should have some clearly defined written guidelines for outside users of your facilities.

Additionally, if you are going to charge a fee, be sure to check with your accountant or tax attorney to ensure any revenue is allowable under Internal Revenue Service guidelines.

Child Protection Policy

In short, your church needs a child protection policy. Child abuse is a daily occurrence, and it could happen even in your church. It happens everywhere, so why would your church be exempt? It doesn't matter if your congregation is small or large, if you have hundreds of kids or just a few—it's no longer acceptable not to be proactive in this area and establish some basic written rules. But it's not as hard as you might think. A good plan will include (a) a written application, (b) a national background check, (c) observance of the 2-adult rule, (d) observance (where applicable) of the 6-month rule, (e) as possible, reference checks, and just as importantly, (f) a response plan.

We have purposely avoided detailing what should be included in an Employee Manual, Transportation Policy, Facility Use Agreement, and a Child Protection Policy

because each could be covered in an article of its own. But we understand that starting or perhaps improving on a plan can be a daunting task, so we're happy to offer some resources that may help you. Our website contains a sample policy for each of these areas to assist you in getting started. Of course we always suggest that you modify these plans to best fit your congregation and seek legal counsel before formally adopting them. If you can't find what you're looking for or have other questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. ✦

Gary Benson

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



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Growing Healthy Inside and Out

By Dianne Davenport

Growing up in a large family, I did a lot of observing as a child. It always seemed better, if not smarter, to be the actual seen one and not the heard one. Because I didn't have much else to do, my entertainment revolved around people-watching, and watch I did! My husband will say it wasn't just my childhood pastime, but that's another story. Perhaps that's why I really don't mind waiting at the airport . . . oh, so many people.

Since there wasn't an abundance of time, energy or money for my parents to bother with five children's individual needs, their focus stayed on providing our bare necessities, and for the rest of our needs . . . I'm quite certain it was the Lord who provided!

God was very intentional, I believe, in leaving my memory intact about several events I observed while I was quite young. There is one, however, that stands out as a never-ending newsreel of the actions of two different categories of people.

Here is the story as I recall it:

My memory takes me to a typical Sunday afternoon when my dad would insist that all five of us kids and my mother load up in his old '50-something Buick and go for a Sunday drive. Dad was always intent on making all of us spend as much time together as possible. No matter how much we would beg to stay home, it just would not happen. If one went, we all had to go.

In a crowded car with lots of kids and crying babies, we were off for our weekly Sunday drive.

This particular Sunday, Nashville had been experiencing an unseasonable cold snap, and the biggest attraction around seemed to be the frozen duck pond in Shelby Park, not far from our house. The drive through the park was always on Dad's itinerary, and especially this Sunday, as news had gotten out that the pond had frozen over. So we set out to take a look.

Peeking through my little corner of the backseat window, I could see people sledding, throwing snowballs, and doing all kinds of things that Nashville weather didn't usually allow. It was proving to be an eventful ride.

We finally made it around the winding curves that would take us to the bend where we could see our favorite duck pond. My mother would usually pack some bread or biscuits that had gotten too stale to eat and give us each a few pieces to feed to the ducks, but not this Sunday. The main attraction today would be to see the pond in all its frozen glory! Maybe we'd even get to see some ducks walking and slipping on the ice. All of us kids thought that would be a pretty funny sight.

But the sight wasn't what any of us were expecting. There was a large crowd of people gathered at the bank of the duck pond as we made the final curve. If there was a crowd at the pond's edge, it was usually lots of children feeding the ducks. But the only people I saw that day were adults, and none looked like they were having fun. They were huddled together screaming, pointing, and waving their arms. I knew something was wrong. Something was terribly wrong.

The next thing I knew our car had pulled up to the shoreline of this half-frozen pond. My dad suddenly jumped out of the car and left it practically running, threw himself on top of the ice and began crawling over the slushy icy pond. Where was he going? What was he doing?

To add to the drama of that moment, my mother rushed out of the car and began jumping up and down and screaming to my dad at the top of her lungs, "Jimmy, get back here!" Everyone seemed to be yelling something at my dad.

Dad didn't react to any of the yells from the shore, but I could see that he kept his eye fixed on a young boy who was crying and begging for someone to help him. The boy's head would bob up and down out of a hole where he had apparently fallen through the ice. He was holding on for dear life trying to catch a piece of ice that he could pull up on . . . but then each piece would break and he would slide back under the water. All of his attempts at pulling himself up were failing, and the only hope he had was someone coming out to rescue him. I had never heard anyone beg for their life before and I knew I would never forget it.

All of us watching knew without saying a word that the chances of this boy making it out of that hole alive were very slim. I watched as his head came up fewer and fewer times. His yells for help kept getting muffled by the water filling his throat. He was about midway across the pond, but in a little girl's estimation he might as well have been a mile from shore.

He was just too far for anyone to reach in time.

But no one told my dad that. I could see that all of Dad's senses were frozen . . . except his sight. He had set his sights on a drowning boy and nothing, nothing would distract him. With a split-second decision to save this boy, he had given no thought to the contents of his pockets or the weight of his shoes. With shoes, jacket and all pocket items including his wallet in tow, Dad chopped and slid his way over to the hole. This boy had one last hope of surviving a foolish dare to cross the half-frozen pond on foot. His hope finally reached him.

The boy at this point was coming up out of the water a lot less frequently, and his cries for help had almost stopped. The hole he had fallen into was very small, and that made it even more difficult to grasp his slippery body or wet clothes. Dad finally caught hold of the boy's jacket and began to pull, but it was plain that he couldn't get enough traction on the ice to pull him out completely.

I think it was at this point I realized full well that there were two types of people in this world. Dad never looked back



If one of us
went, we all
had to go.



to the shore for help, but he stayed focused on holding onto the boy and reaching back into the water for him each time he would slip from his hand. The struggle seemed to go on forever, especially as my mother kept screaming for someone, anyone standing on the shore to go and help him. She pleaded and begged. But there were no takers.

Everyone else seemed too petrified to head out over the melting ice, and so just for a moment it seemed as if one of the two people in the pond might not make it back to shore. Then all of a sudden—not sure where he came from—one man dropped to his knee, not knees, because he only had one leg and a stump of the other one, and he began a treacherous crawl out on the ice to help.

But what could a one-legged man do? For a moment though things looked hopeful. Just the appearance of someone headed out to my dad gave us great relief.

When the one-legged man got fairly close to my dad, he was able to throw him a rope that he had retrieved from the trunk of his car. My dad caught hold of it with one hand and pulled the boy out with the other. Using one strong arm and all his upper body strength, he brought

up a blue-faced boy from the brink of death to glorious uninterrupted breaths of air. It was an amazing sight! The cries on shore suddenly turned to cheers!

After what seemed to be an hour but must have been only minutes, all three headed back to shore. My dad and the young boy were loaded into a car and taken to the hospital. They were both checked out by doctors, who found that no permanent harm had been done.

So . . . at an early age I realized there was a question that needed answering. What causes one person to jump into icy waters and risk their very life to save a stranger, while another person seems satisfied to stand and watch?

It was years before I would realize the answer lay in God's plan for men's lives. God has in mind for all of us to be heroes: heroes of the faith, that we jump in with both feet where God has led us. He never pushes us into the icy waters, but He gently leads us to the brink to see if we will take His hand and let him lead us through. Why? So that we will never see ourselves as sufficient, but will know beyond any doubt that our success was because we were totally dependent on Him.



Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 12:9: But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

Moses, having had a personal encounter with God at the burning bush, still questions the call of God on his life. Gideon was called a "mighty warrior" by God, yet he thought he needed a large army to defeat his enemies. Peter was called "the rock" by Jesus, yet he denied he ever knew Him.

What made the ending of these stories successful? There was strength and courage. Not the type of strength or courage we can muster up ourselves, but coming from the knowledge and assurance that the Lord goes with us wherever we go.

God said to Joshua in Joshua 1:9: Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

Whether we are standing on the edge of the Red Sea, standing on the brink of the Promised Land, or standing on the shore at an icy duck pond, God's goal is to take out all danger of our self-reliance and display His power in our weaknesses.

The Old Testament says it this way in Judges 7:2: The Lord said to Gideon, "You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, 'My own strength has saved me.'"

My dad and all of us knew it was God who gave him first the courage and then the strength to save this young boy.

I'm not sure if there's a situation we could possibly face where these truths can't be applied:

1. *Jesus invites us to do things that He could do alone, but chooses to use us, His chosen instrument. Then he brings us into His story and we become a part of the story of God.*
2. *The world around us is filled with drowning people waiting to be rescued.*
3. *God gives us strength and courage as we face the impossible knowing that with God all things are possible.*
4. *We may be alone in the task God has given us even though there are people who could help but choose only to watch.*
5. *We must never lose sight of the goal God has set before us; someone's eternal destiny might be at stake.*
6. *We must live our lives knowing that God has placed the possibility of being a hero in all of us. We just might be the strong arm that God uses to reach down and bring a lost soul to Jesus.*

My dad's only lasting and visible signs of the rescue were the cuts and deep scrapes on his fist and the sides of his hands. He had used his hands like an axe to chop through the ice one inch at a time to reach the boy.

When Dad was much older, he had a severe stroke that left him completely paralyzed on his right side, but the rehabilitation workers always told us that his left hand was unbelievably strong. They didn't know just how strong both hands had been. Strong enough to bring a boy back from the brink of death.

My Dad's story showed me what that kind of love looks like with skin on.



Dad lost his ability to speak from the stroke, but never his mind. He would sit and look at his hands in his wheelchair, then he would look up at me, I would look at him . . . he would smile and would wipe away a tear falling down my cheek . . . without saying a word we knew what we both were thinking. I was thinking his scars proved my dad was a hero. Dad was thinking a little boy would have died if not for those scars. And that made him smile.

Isn't that what Jesus does with us? He shows us His scars. His scars prove to us that He is our hero, our rescuer. Jesus knows we would have died if not for those scars. And that makes Him smile.

The rest of the story:

The picture that was put in our local newspaper the next day said it all. Dad and the boy were in a tight hug, with huge smiles on their faces. The young boy and my dad stayed in touch for years and later the boy became our paperboy. He delivered our paper each morning, and it served as a constant reminder that the gift of life demands a sacrifice. Not sure what happened to him later in his life, but I'm sure he has a great story to tell about a stranger who jumped into a half-frozen pond to save him. Probably no mention of all the concerned people that stood on shore.

My dad's favorite part of the story was telling how a one-legged man was the only person willing to risk his life to save a dying boy. We all knew better. It was Dad who had carved out the path for the one-legged man with his very own fist. His scars were visible until the day he died. As a little girl and a grown-up girl, I always saw them as war wounds of a warrior-hero.

Looking back, I'm now sorry for all the people who just stood watching on the bank of that pond. I'm sorry they never knew the pure exhilaration of doing the right thing without question, reservation or reward. I'm sorry they didn't know the warmth of leaving icy waters.

When we're standing at the edge of an opportunity and God lets us know we are His chosen instrument for this assignment, may we know God has put in us His strength and His courage to finish the work He has begun in us.

For me, I see Jesus willingly climbing onto the cross, stretching out His hands waiting for the nails, so that He might one day show us the scars that demonstrate His determination to rescue us. My Dad's story showed me what that kind of love looks like with skin on. It's unselfish and unhindered love for others.

So when opportunities come up that seem impossible, my mind goes back to a man jumping full throttle with grit and determination into a place that only heroes go: cold, very cold, icy waters. ✦

Dianne Davenport



Dianne earned a teaching degree from Belmont University. She is in her 8th year of teaching an adult Life Group at Champion Forest Baptist Church. She and her husband David have been married for 43 years and she spends much of her time with her five (soon to be six) grandchildren. She helped launch the M.O.M.S. (Mothers of Many Seasons) group at CFBC seven years ago. Dianne's greatest joy is in serving the Lord and she stays challenged with each new adventure.



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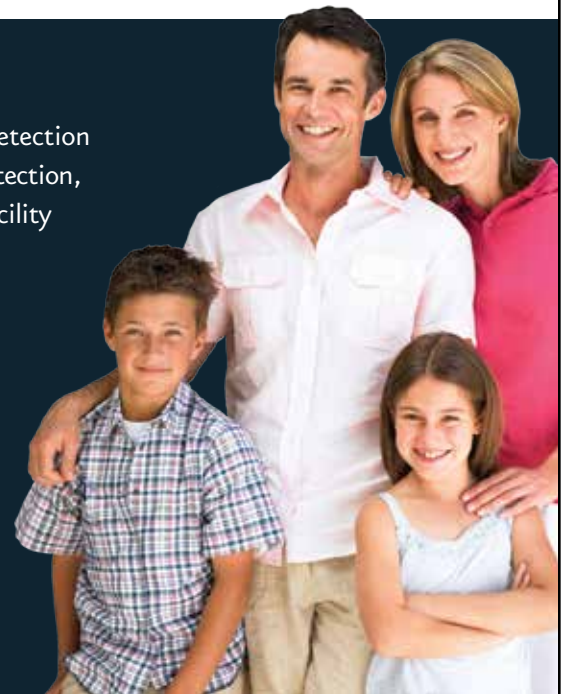
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Texas Ministry ConferenceSM

2014 Recap



"I have been attending the yearly conference for several years now and I always walk away encouraged, strengthened, and wiser in my field! Plus I enjoy the camaraderie of the different church denominations coming together. Speakers and workshops are well chosen as well as the vendors. Food is always an A+ too. I look forward to going every year!"

Lois Brorsen
Houston, TX



What did you like best about the Conference?

"The classes I chose gave specific help in the areas that I needed. Not just theories."

"It was well organized."

"Conversations with other participants."

"The 'target specific' break out sessions."

"Diversity of topics."

"Having it all in one place: workshops, vendors, food."

"Good speakers and good pastors' track."

"The Keynote speaker was really good and the food was awesome!"





More favorites of the Texas Ministry Conference

"Opportunity to visit with vendors/interesting topics for classes."

"Pastors' sessions."

"The variety and quality of the break out seminars."

"Opportunity to explore new resources in my field."

"All of the choices. I often struggle which to attend."

"The range of topic options."

"All the workshops I attended were fascinating and wonderfully practical."





Keynote, Ken Davis

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Energy Savings for Your Church or School

By Michael Bernstein

Let's start from the inside and look for cost savings for your home, church or school in the way you use electricity.

There are a number of traditional items and also a number of new tricks and technologies that can give you more control over your energy bills. Take a look at this information from the U. S. Department of Energy. Many of these listed items will apply to your church and school, as well as to your home.

Contact John or me for a savings analysis for your church or school electric bill. By joining our Power Buying Pool group, over 300 churches and schools are enjoying a discounted group rate.

If your church or school needs assistance with building improvements to reduce your energy usage, contact us for a quality referral to one of our CO+OP vendors or one of our TES partner engineers.

(Please note that in the pie chart below, in Texas you can just flip the categories from the 9% cooling and the 45% space heating.) +

Michael Bernstein
TES Energy Services, LP
Phone: (832) 516-8525

John Blunt
TES Energy Services, LP
Phone: (214) 697-0567

Debbie Bennett
TES Energy Services, LP
Phone: (817) 692-8526

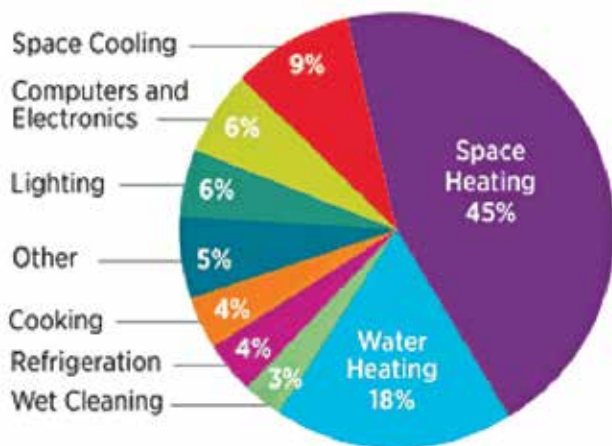


Tips: Your Home's Energy Use



What does this mean for me?

- An energy assessment will help you pinpoint where you are losing energy
- The findings from an assessment will help you set your energy priorities
- You can save 5%-30% on your energy bill by making upgrades following a home energy assessment



How We Use Energy in Our Homes. Heating accounts for the biggest portion of your utility bills.
Source: 2010 Buildings Energy Data Book, Table 2.1.1 Residential Primary Energy Consumption, by Year and Fuel Type.

How does it work?

You can conduct your own do-it-yourself energy assessment or hire a professional. A professional energy auditor runs a series of tests to determine where your home is losing energy. Watch the Energy 101 video [on www.energy.gov/public-services/homes/home-weatherization/home-energy-audits] to learn more.

A home energy assessment (sometimes referred to as an energy audit) will show what parts of your house use the most energy and suggest the best ways to cut energy costs. You can conduct a simple home energy assessment by doing it yourself (DIY) or, for a more detailed assessment, contact your local utility or an energy auditor. Our Energy Saver 101 infographic breaks down a home energy audit, explaining what energy auditors look for and the special tools they use to determine where a home is wasting energy. Also, you can learn more about home energy audits and find free tools and calculators on the Residential Services Network or the Building Performance Institute.

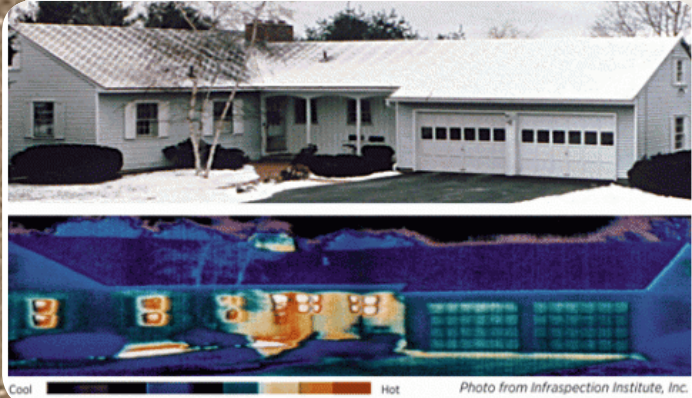
DIY Energy Assessment Tips

- Check the insulation in your attic, exterior and basement walls, ceilings, floors, and crawl spaces. To determine the insulation R-values in different parts of your home, visit the Air Leaks and Insulation section.
- Check for air leaks around your walls, ceilings, windows, doors, light and plumbing fixtures, switches, and electrical outlets.
- Check for open fireplace dampers.
- Make sure your appliances and heating and cooling systems are properly maintained. Check your owner's manuals for the recommended maintenance.
- Study your family's lighting needs and look for ways to use controls--like sensors, dimmers, or timers--to reduce lighting use.

Your Whole-House Plan

After you know where your home is losing energy, make a plan by asking yourself a few questions:

- How much money do you spend on energy?
- Where are your greatest energy losses?
- How long will it take for an investment in energy efficiency to pay for itself in energy cost savings?
- Do the energy-saving measures provide additional benefits that are important to you—for example, increased comfort from installing double-paned, efficient windows?
- How long do you plan to own your current home?
- Can you do the job yourself or do you need a contractor?
- What is your budget?
- How much time do you have for maintenance and repairs?



Heat Loss from a House

A picture is worth... in this case, lost heating dollars. This thermal image--taken by a professional energy auditor--shows warm air escaping through windows and cracks. The red shows where the warmest air is escaping.

Planning smart purchases and home improvements will maximize your energy efficiency and save you the most money.

A more advanced alternative to performing a DIY energy assessment is to get advice from your state energy office, utility, or an independent energy auditor. . . A professional energy auditor uses special test equipment to find air leaks, areas lacking insulation, and malfunctioning equipment. The auditor analyzes how well your home's energy systems work together, and compares the analysis to your utility bills. After gathering information about your home, the auditor will recommend cost-effective energy improvements that enhance comfort and safety. Some will also estimate how soon your investment in efficiency upgrades will pay off.

Windows, Doors, & Skylights



Installing storm windows keeps your home warm in the winter and cool in the summer while also lowering your energy bills by up to \$350 a year. Start saving today by following a step-by-step guide in our new DIY Savings Project.

Energy-efficient windows, doors, and skylights—also known as fenestration—can help lower a home's heating, cooling, and lighting costs. Learn about the energy performance ratings to consider when selecting windows, doors, and skylights, and how to maximize their energy efficiency in your home.

Featured

Energy-Efficient Windows - Windows affect home aesthetics as well as energy use.

Window Types - By combining an energy-efficient frame choice with glazing materials for your climate, you can customize your home's windows and reduce your energy bills.

Energy-Efficient Window Treatments - Choose window treatments that allow you to use natural light while reducing the heat gained in your house when the weather is warm and lost when it's cold.

Storm Windows - If your budget is tight, storm windows are less expensive than new, energy-efficient windows.

Doors - Replacing or caulking and weather-stripping exterior doors can save money and energy in your home.

Skylights - When properly selected and installed, an energy-efficient skylight can help minimize your heating, cooling, and lighting costs.

5 Steps to Making Your Windows More Energy Efficient

Whether you're a professional home performance contractor or a do-it-yourself homeowner, learn five simple steps for making your windows more energy efficient.

This time of year, you might think that replacing old, drafty windows is the only way to keep your home warm in the winter. Think again!

Switching to new energy-efficient windows can be expensive -- ranging from \$8,000-\$15,000 or more for a typical home. Despite windows accounting for more than 30 percent of a typical home's heating losses regardless of their age, you can improve your home's comfort and lower your energy bills by sealing air leaks, repairing windows and investing in better insulation.

If your primary windows are in fairly good condition, attaching storm windows -- in particular, low-emissivity or "low-e" storm windows -- can boost energy efficiency and comfort at about a quarter of the cost of a total replacement. Whether you are a professional home performance contractor or a do-it-yourself homeowner, follow these five simple steps for making your windows more energy efficient.

Step 1: Preparing Your Existing Windows

To determine whether you should add storm windows, check each existing window to ensure there is no missing glass, rotting wood, broken parts, or egregious air and water leakage. If there are obvious leaks around the frame of the window, some weatherization and rehab may be necessary before installing the storm windows.

You or your contractor can learn more about energy-efficient and durable window rehabs from the comprehensive Wood Window Repair, Rehabilitation & Replacement Guide. And check out Savings Projects for step-by-step guides to caulking and weather-stripping your windows.

Step 2: Install High Efficiency Low-E Coating Storm Windows

If your window is in good condition -- but you are still concerned about comfort, heat loss and air leakage -- consider mounting a low-e storm window as an exterior attachment or as an interior panel to your existing window.

Any well-constructed and well-installed storm window can reduce air infiltration through the window, whether it's coated or not. However, low-e coating (a nearly invisible layer on the glass) reduces conduction and radiation heat losses even further and can improve overall

energy savings by 10-15 percent more than standard storm windows without the high-performance coating.

In fact, the incremental cost of using low-e glass versus clear glass storm windows is well worth the investment. A recent Energy Department study that examined storm windows in various U.S. climate zones found that low-e storm windows are cost-effective in all climate zones, with an average payback of two to four years.

Step 3: Where to Find Low-E Storm Windows

While some big-box retailers stock standard sizes of storm windows, to ensure a good fit with your existing window, storm windows should typically be custom ordered. Low-e storm windows should also be customized and are available for order from both independent window dealers and big-box retailers. The Building America Programs' Solution Center provides guidance on making accurate measurements of your primary window to ensure a good storm window fit.

Step 4: Look for Utility Incentives for Installing Low-E Storm Windows

Several regional utilities offer rebates and incentives for purchasing and installing storm windows. While some utilities may not specifically include storm windows as part of their incentive programs, they may generally include them under building enclosure/insulation or window categories.

Ask your local utility about incentives for low-e storm windows, and check energy.gov/savings.

Step 5: Keep Your Storm Windows Up All Year Round

Although storm windows and panels can always be removed, they also can be mounted as permanent installations. Unlike your grandmother's storm windows, modern storm windows are operable windows that can be left in place year-round, with sashes and insect screens that can be opened in the summer.

When compared to not installing storm windows at all, low-e storm windows can help save 12-33 percent in a year heating and cooling costs -- a finding that is based on Energy Department field tests and case studies. That means if your annual heating and cooling expenses are about \$1,000, installing storm windows would likely save \$120-\$330 each year -- or even more if your existing windows are leaky. ✦

Once again, if you have any questions, or are interested in lowering your electricity bill, please give John Blunt or myself a call at TES Energy Services, LP.

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Healthy Church Facilities Are NOT Held Together With Duct Tape: Condition and Story Matter

By Tim Cool

I love duct tape as much as the next guy. In fact, I believe that I can repair just about anything in our house with duct tape. When I was in my early years of college I took a two-year sabbatical to travel with a musical group out of Nashville called “Bridge”. We did over 350 concerts a year, traveling from town to town and church to church. Every night we did a concert in a new location and so we set up and tore down our sound system each night. We had wires going everywhere. So to “dress up” the stage and to make it safe to navigate the performance area, we used duct tape to secure the wires. We would buy a case of it at a time, burning through a case every few weeks. I even had to repair a pair of pants, due to an attire malfunction, with duct tape until we could locate a seamstress.



Duct tape is the dream product for repairing and securing just about anything. But after our concerts each night, we pulled up the tape and threw it away. It did not stay as a permanent part of the décor of the church we were at. It was installed and removed the same day . . . because it was never intended to be a permanent fixture in the facility. However, I cannot begin to tell you how many times I visit a church that has elected to use duct tape as a permanent component of their interior design scheme. The congregation steps over the duct tape week in and week out, totally oblivious to the gray stripe on the worn-out carpet.

The longer you live in a space, the less you see the obvious. Your regular attenders become immune to the condition of the facility. It is kind of like putting a frog in a pot of cool water and then turning up the temperature to bring it to a boil. We stop seeing the trees for the forest. We walk past the grass growing in the cracks of the parking lot. We step over the torn carpet. We know exactly how to avoid the potholes in the parking lot. We do not notice the stained ceiling and overlook the odor and condition of our public restrooms. But I assure you, your guests do not overlook them. These inconsistencies in the story can be just as distracting and repulsive as poor design and the lack of signage and poor interactions.

This past year our team attended two conferences at large influential churches. The first was a church in Southern California with a campus that is the best-kept facility I have ever visited. It has five to six buildings uniquely located on a 50-acre site with an attention to detail second to none. When you first pull onto the property, you are greeted by signage at nearly every intersection of the parking lot to guide you to your destination. The grounds were immaculately manicured and all the hedges trimmed and neat. The buildings were clean and organized, lacking disruptive clutter in the common areas. The restrooms were neat, clean and odor free. Not opulent, but comfortable. The windows and glass were clean, and I did not see any duct tape on the floors. I had to look really hard to find a handful of things to complain about...and trust me, I was looking. But even the handful of items I found were not deal killers...just me being anal.

The other conference was in central Florida at a very large church. This is a church with an impactful TV ministry and a dynamic pastor. The conference had over 5000 people in attendance, so this was no small campus. But I was very disappointed with the condition of the facility. The signage on the campus was lacking, and a significant amount of the parking was gravel. As I approached the





buildings after parking in the gravel lot, I was immediately taken aback by the lack of care of the grounds. The yards were in desperate need of attention, and the trees and shrubs needed a good trim. The buildings felt old and tired, lacking any visual appeal. Then as I ventured deeper into the campus, the pathways led me to the sea of modular classrooms, all looking like a bad public school. In fact, the speaker's lounge was in one of these spaces, which gave the impression that "OK" was good enough for them. There was no sense of excellence or intentionality to the space. Touring the actual worship center revealed aged and worn pews, carpet that was wrinkled in lieu of lying flat, and restrooms that really could have used some TLC.

Now, I am sure there may be good reasons for this lack of care, and as a believer and potentially a highly sensitive observer of spaces, I can still worship and enjoy my time with other believers in such a space. But what about our guests, especially those who are not believers? Will they be as forgiving? Will the condition of our facilities leave a lasting negative impression on them? Will these roadblocks

keep them from coming back or sharing their experience with others who may not darken the doors of your church because of what they hear about your facility?

It would be a shame to have been intentional about the design of your facility, parking ministry, themed spaces and script writing, then to be neglectful with the care and condition of the facility. Don't let the care and upkeep become the forgotten chapter of your story. ✦

Tim Cool

Chief Solutions Offices at Cool Solutions Group

Tim has assisted more than 350 churches (equating to over four million square feet) throughout the United States with their facility needs. He has collaborated with churches in the areas of facility needs analysis, design coordination, pre-construction coordination, construction management and life cycle planning/management. Tim is also the author of "Why Church Buildings Matter: The Story of Your Space" and co-authored "Church Locality" with Jim Tomberlin.

Tim has been married to his best friend, Lisa, for 29 years and resides in Charlotte, NC with their 17-year-old triplets. They are active members at Elevation Church.

Tim can be reached at tim@coolsolutionsgroup.com

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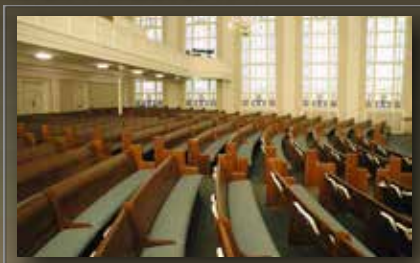
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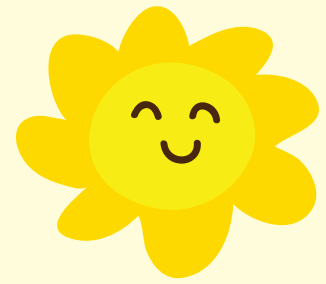
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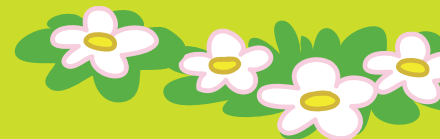


The Value of Play: Developing Meaningful, Research-Based Play for the Entire Family

By Anne-Marie Spencer

When we consider the inherent value of play, our thoughts generally turn to the physical benefits gained by movement—burning calories, developing strength, and obtaining cardiovascular benefits. However, current research in established and emerging play-science disciplines shows it delivers much more to help children and families grow from the inside out.

In the treatise “Words on Play,” contributions by many of today’s top play scholars outline a set of widely diverse benefits, from social capital to overall brain development. We know play is dynamic and active, but providing ample opportunities to engage in meaningful play experiences also affords people the ability to connect with the natural world, forge friendships, build social skills, and create a healthy life balance that allows them to be passionate, creative contributors to society.



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Lev Vygotsky stated in 1978 that "... play contains all developmental tendencies ... and is itself a major source of development. ... Children are at their highest level of development when they are at play." Dr. Joe Frost, EdD, Professor Emeritus at the University of Texas, expands the statement in "Words on Play": "Play contributes to academic learning, sharpens fitness, elevates mood and memory, lowers stress, helps prevent disease, and promotes physical and mental health and healing that are evident across the lifespan." Indeed, play coupled with healthy diet throughout one's life leads to longer, more enjoyable lives with improved balance and flexibility, as opposed to the limited mobility experienced by many adults who practice a sedentary lifestyle.

Perhaps one of the most interesting areas of play research is in the arena of brain development. Dr. Stuart Brown, in his contribution to the treatise, states that the explosion of shared information that our neuroscience community is beginning to deepen and alter the brain science view of play behavior in exciting new perspectives. Data and research is clearly demonstrating how play deprivation can affect the ability to manage stress, achieve social norms, and regulate emotion. Animal-play researchers have discovered that the origins of play behavior stem from the deepest survival centers of mammal brainstem and limbic systems, similar to survival instincts that foster sleep, dreams, and fundamental caretaking. With the current research taking place on the science of play, it is an exciting time for this emerging discipline.

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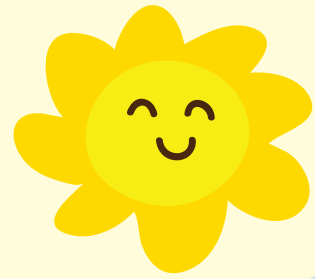


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If you've ever stopped to observe people fully immersed in play, you will also note the imagination and creativity that is evident. By creating play spaces that are sensory rich and supportive of the need for stimulation, we can guide exploration, discovery, creativity, and imagination. Including natural elements, moving and loose parts, and rich qualities, we can support the ever-changing pattern of children's perspectives, giving them an arena to develop in an environment that stays fresh and exciting to their evolving skills and imaginative processes. Dr. Nilda Cosco of the Natural Learning Initiative states that "It is through play that we share our abilities, make contact with our deepest self, and unleash our potential." Providing a play environment to encourage these developmental tendencies to their fullest potential is a responsibility that we must embrace, research, and develop. Gone are the days of measuring a playground's value by the number of components, height of deck, and color palette. Today's play science and research indicates that we must also use available programming and research to ensure that the environments we provide are family-friendly, developmentally appropriate, and enriching, across a spectrum of disciplines, to children and families of all abilities, so that play spaces provide an arena for everyone to play, regardless of age or ability.

These days we all live with the stress of fast-paced lifestyles. Too often, play time is cut out to make room for all of the other areas of our lives we need to manage. Play is also often seen as a child's game, and playing together is one area of our busy lives that we can pretty easily choose to omit in order to make the other areas of our lives easier to manage. It's important to note, however, that making time for it and involving the whole

family can make wonderful things happen. Family values begin with family relationships, and family relationships that begin with shared activity and play time provide a meaningful way to put values into practice. Families that play are happy: they talk, laugh, share, and build lifelong memories. They demonstrate to each other that healthy, active behavior is important, and help instill that importance in their children, who carry it forward into adulthood and future generations. Families simply need time together, and play is the perfect vehicle to get there. Play can even open closed lines of communication, build trust, and enable meaningful conversations that may not have occurred otherwise. It builds family togetherness and support.

Play matters, play is vital, and play builds both social and community capital in the communities that embrace the challenge of developing a healthier place to live, work, and play. We must align advocates and resources to creatively support play initiatives, and we must continue to demonstrate the best practices found in the simple act of play—for our own health and well-being, for the health of our families, and for the communities we serve. +

Anne-Marie Spencer

Anne-Marie Spencer is the Vice President of Marketing and Communications for PlayCore. To obtain a complimentary copy of "Words on Play", read more in-depth research from contributing play scholars, and receive newsletter updates on emerging play science and research, email her at aspencer@playcore.com.



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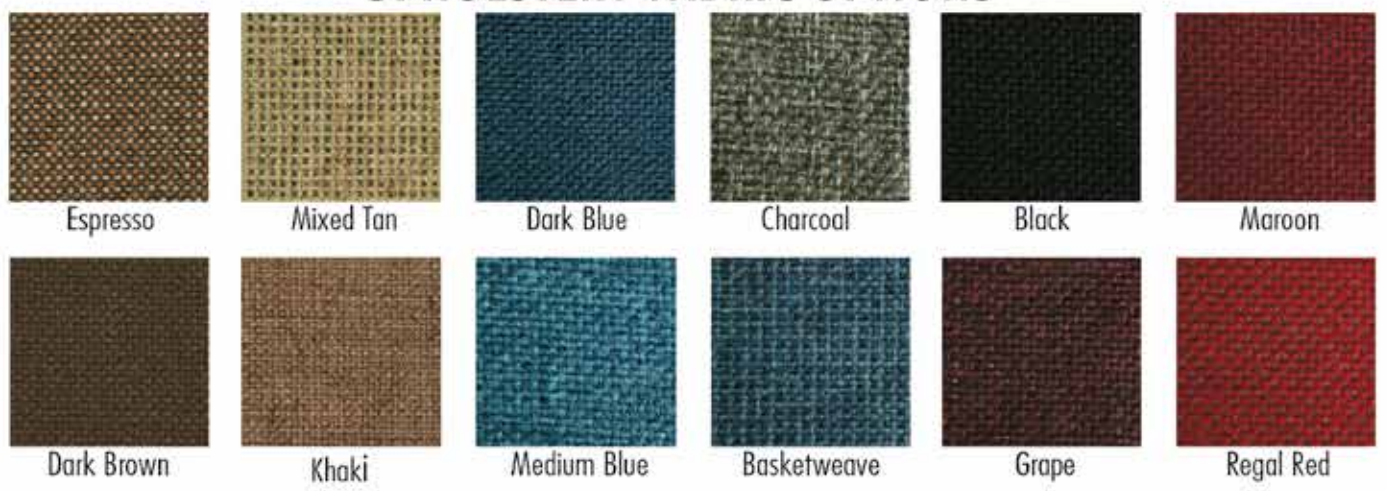
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WaterLogic

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WaterLogic, headquartered in Houston, Texas, is a professional irrigation water management company. We use our "smart-water" controllers to help achieve the greatest savings in irrigation water, and annually have consistently saved our clients an average of 40% of their irrigation water and water expenses.

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"What makes WaterLogic unique is the fact that those controllers are checking the weather station on an hourly basis. And with the size of our community, we can have a significant amount of rainfall on the north side and none on the south side. Knowing what is happening at each of the controller locations will allow us to be better stewards of the water." – Sandy Denton, General Manager, Sienna Plantation Residential Association

"Weingarten Realty has had WaterLogic's smart-water technology installed on several properties since 2006. We experienced tremendous success at those sites, and we have now rolled it out to forty more locations across the country. WaterLogic is helping Weingarten Realty to conserve water, cut operating costs and enhance our 'green' initiatives."

– Bill Goeke, Senior Vice President and Director, Weingarten Realty.

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- Create a Healthier Landscape

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By Sherri Shulman, Shulman & Associates, March 2014

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

CO+OP: The original cooperative organization for churches, schools, camps, para-churches, and other non-profit ministries.

What CO+OP is: Our CO+OP is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization in business since 1988. We are Members and Vendors working together to provide significant savings on goods and services.

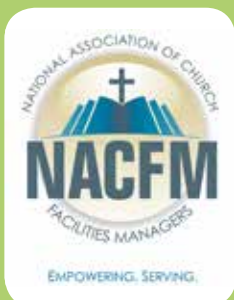
Why CO+OP: The purpose of our CO+OP is to help ministries save money on the goods and services they are buying. Examples include:

- office supplies
- electricity
- food service
- security and phone systems
- printing
- signs
- copiers and duplicators
- HVAC resources
- lamps and electrical supplies
- coffee service
- advertising and promotional items
- consulting, training, and development
- banking and lending
- CPA services
- personnel, finance, risk reduction and insurance
- janitorial and sanitation supplies and tools
- roofing and construction
- flooring/floor mats
- custom office stamps
- furniture and equipment
- janitorial service
- maintenance, repair parts and tools
- disaster recovery and carpet cleaning
- glass tinting
- IT services and equipment
- repair and replace A/V electronic devices
- construction management
- water management

Vendors with a national presence include:

- Blackmon Mooring
- Church Interiors
- National Signs
- Office Depot
- Mity-Lite
- American Institute for Servant Leadership
- Hillyard
- Insurance One

How to participate: Join by phone 888.350.3264.



CO+OP participates with... the National Association of Church Facilities Managers (NACFM) and the National Association of Church Business Administration (NACBA).



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About Us...

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Our proven performance led us to be among the 12 founding companies of Comfort Systems USA, now the nation's premier provider of mechanical solutions with over 50 affiliate companies across the nation. As a part of the Comfort Systems USA family, our buying power, bonding capacity and financial strength is unrivaled, putting us in a position to provide competitive offerings that give our clients the highest value as well as peace of mind.

Why we stand apart from the rest:

- Safety record that outperforms the national average
- Technical proficiency with all major manufacturers
- National Footprint / Local Presence
- An Energy-Star® partner
- United States Green Building Council member
- LEED® Accredited Professionals

Why Comfort Systems USA South Central?

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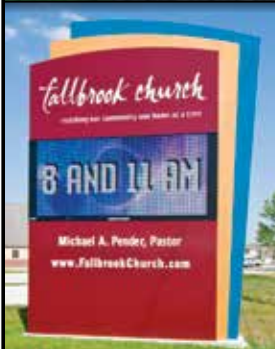
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