

VOCATIONAL STEWARDSHIP
FOR THE COMMON GOOD

K I N G D O M

C A L L I N G

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Foreword by Reggie McNeal

Afterword by Steven Garber

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or means.

Foreword

Two recent personal conversations tell the story inside the story of this book. The first one took place over dinner in my home with my older daughter. “I don’t need the church coming up with anything else for me to do in order to be missional,” she said. “I feel missional five days a week.” Working as a Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) in a local hospital, she is exposed to the dark underbelly of our culture, helping people each day sort through a series of health-care options that will shape the next chapter of their lives. Lots of times none of the options are good, and people are devastated. Often she is the only person who can speak a word of hope in the situation. She is living out her faith in a place and in a way that really counts. Right where life (and death) is happening.

The second conversation took place half a continent away from me. A pastor relayed to one of our Leadership Network researchers a comment made by one of his team members after they had participated in our Missional Renaissance Leadership Community. The multiple teams involved in this leadership community include both church leaders and community leaders who figure out ways to fast-forward the church’s missional engagement in their respective communities. This particular team had brought their city’s mayor to a recent gathering in Dallas. On the flight back home from the experience the mayor commented to the pastor, “I have never thought of my job as mayor as a ministry—until now.” I suspect no church committee assignment could compare in terms of community impact with what this guy does every single day.

My daughter and the mayor represent a growing number of people who share an awareness that kingdom assignments typically involve venues beyond local church real estate and programming. Kingdom callings take us

There's peace
mission
after

Hill paid his employees to work for Oklahoma City for a year and half; how impressive it is that young Wendy Clark has created not just jobs but a deeply supportive work environment for low-income Latinas who would more typically face grueling labor conditions. As the twenty-somethings would say of these actions: "How cool is *that!*" And these actions are indeed impressive.

In addition to telling these kinds of inspirational success stories, though, there remains a role for church leaders to continue to teach on some less "sexy" familiar topics as they disciple their people for blooming. One is *ethics*. Since the workplace is fallen, there will always be a place for strong teaching from the pulpit on personal holiness on the job. The second is evangelism. Church leaders should regularly remind their flocks that the amazingly good news of the good news needs to be shared with our non-believing coworkers. Finally, church leaders should continue emphasizing one other E-word: excellence.

Recently I learned that a friend has a malignant brain tumor. Right now, more than anything else, I want her doctor to be *really good* at brain surgery. Right now, I care more about that than I do about whether he offers his services pro bono at the free clinic or if his management style is hierarchical. Similarly, when I'm driving over a long bridge, I trust that the bridge inspector is someone who takes her job very seriously, who is highly competent and vigilant. I want the chemists and engineers at our region's nuclear power plant to be diligent, careful experts in the safe operations of the facility. I want my veterinarian to be on top of the latest research that can help my sick pet. The quiet, faithful, diligent pursuit of excellence in a vocation can be absolutely vital.

Telling stories of excellence may feel less exciting than showcasing the sorts of stories we've looked at here. But every vocational stewardship initiative should be careful to include teaching on this virtue. Indeed, in some cases, given the weight of their individual responsibilities, some believers may need to view excellence as the highest among the kingdom values they are seeking to live by as they bloom for Jesus in their profession.

Pathway 2

DONATE YOUR SKILLS

I want [congregants] to have moments with God that take their breath away because of the activation and deployment of a gift that He gave them that makes them feel like difference-makers in a broken world. And we as church leaders have that gift to give every volunteer.

BILL HYBELS, FOUNDING PASTOR,
WILLOW CREEK CHURCH

Paper chemist Dan Blevins doesn't see himself as an extraordinary guy. He grew up in a small town in Michigan, went off to college and got a job after graduation. He found a wife, started a family. They joined a church. At Mt. Pisgah United Methodist Church in Atlanta, Dan sang in the choir and volunteered with the recreational ministry as a soccer referee.¹

In April 2003, Dan turned fifty. He'd worked for Dow Chemical Company for nearly a quarter-century. He heard about a missions conference coming to downtown Atlanta in June and decided to attend. Given his recent milestone birthday, he chose to follow the track at the conference organized by the Finishers Project. (Finishers Project's mission is to connect midlife adults with "global impact opportunities for God.")² On the last day, Dan attended a workshop titled "Finding Your Place in Ministry: Your Skills are Needed."

"The instructor began his presentation stating that regardless of what

your skills were, there was a ministry somewhere that could use you," Dan says.³ Then the presenter said he'd ask each person in the room a little about her or his job, and then make a recommendation of a ministry that could make use of those skills. "He started around the room to my left," Dan says, "and the examples began to flow. Teacher, electrician, nurse—and with each person [he'd] reel off ministries and places in the world where they could be involved." When the presenter got to Dan, though, he was stumped. He wasn't sure how God would use a paper chemist.

"Suddenly, from the back of the room a voice called out," Dan recalls. Someone announced that they'd met a ministry leader in the exhibitors hall that needed a paper chemist. Dan rushed to that ministry's booth after the session.

There he learned that Village Handcrafters, a livelihood ministry among squatters outside Manila, had engaged about forty people in making handmade paper products from hemp. The enterprise provided jobs and generated revenue to support three Filipino church plants. When Dan contacted the ministry's founder, Ed Landry, and explained his professional background, Ed didn't hesitate to say, "We are self-taught amateurs. We really need you to come to the Philippines and help us."

Dan says, "That was enough for me. It was clear that God had hooked me up with a ministry that needed my special knowledge. Wow!"

During Dan's first ten-day visit to Manila, he was able to help Village Handcrafters cut their processing time for a batch of hemp pulp from nine hours to three and to reduce their chemical costs per batch by nearly 90 percent. "It was really in the sweet spot of what I like to do: technical problem solving," he reports. During subsequent trips, Dan taught his Filipino friends new wastewater treatment processes, another one of his areas of expertise. His most recent involvements have been in leading teams from Mt. Pisgah to Kenya to install water purification systems that utilize a technology he learned from his work at Dow Chemical.

Serving abroad by using his unique vocational skills has brought Dan profound joy and has deepened his Christian faith. While he had fun serving in Mt. Pisgah's music and recreational ministries, they did not enrich his spiritual life the way this vocational stewardship has. Because God led him to serving opportunities so customized to his skills, Dan's faith in God's personal care for him deepened.

When you see something that calls you so specifically to an area that you're prepared for and you really love to do, that's when it feels really, really personal. That's when you say, "Yeah, I know God knows me, knows my name, and he cares for me." When he really grabs you by the shirt and says, "Come here, do this thing over here," it's just really tremendous reinforcement of these things that we often talk about and believe. I deeply believe it's true based on what has happened to me.

While Dan doesn't see himself as extraordinary, his story has become catalytic at Mt. Pisgah. On the church's website, on the Volunteering page under "Global Mission," the text reads, "If God can use the skills of a paper chemist for the cause of world evangelism (just ask Dan Blevins his story!), then God can use whatever skills, talents, and willingness to serve that He's given you!"⁴

Dan's experience led church staff to focus more intentionally on helping members find ways to deploy their specific skills in ministry. And his wife leads an adult education class called "Finding Your PLACE in Ministry,"⁵ which combines spiritual gifts assessment with personality, interests, work style and background assessments. "The idea is that you can serve in lots of ways but you're not really going to be happy unless you find something that's your sweet spot," Dan explains.

He continues, "We've got a number of businesspeople [in the congregation]. They're marketers or management people or business executives, and they've said, 'Okay, where do I fit into this?'" Several of these congregants are serving through a ministry Mt. Pisgah partners with called International Leadership Institute. "It's largely a ministry that goes and holds leadership conferences lots of places around the world," Dan says. "And [for] a lot of businesspeople, that's how they see themselves: 'Gee, I'm an organizational leader, and this is how I can influence [others].'" Teaching abroad has been very rewarding for these business executives, Dan says. "They really find it exciting because they use [these skills] in their corporate business setting, and it resonates with what they like to do and what they know how to do."

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In the previous chapter we saw that the primary expression of vocational stewardship that church leaders should encourage is "blooming where you're

planted.” But sometimes employees have additional energy to give outside their daily job and are eager to deploy their vocational skill on behalf of a ministry. In other instances, believers face obstacles to blooming. Some church members are young workers new in their jobs. They may feel that their inexperience, lack of seniority or lowly position significantly limits their scope for advancing kingdom foretastes. Other congregants may be working in jobs that don’t match their vocational gifts, such as the aspiring artist who is currently waiting tables. And even older congregants with seniority at their workplaces may face institutional constraints to blooming, such as a hostile boss or a powerful bureaucracy that limits his or her voice.

Such workers may need to be challenged to think harder and more creatively about how they could bloom.⁶ But in some cases, these individuals may have more capacity for deploying their vocational talents *outside* their regular job. Pathway two of vocational stewardship is about donating vocational skills to nonprofits and ministries—within the church, in the local community or abroad—that can use them to advance God’s kingdom. Churches with the ability to promote not only blooming but also this pathway may discover that many congregants respond enthusiastically to meaningful opportunities to use their job skills on their off time.

A COMMON-SENSE—YET DISCOURAGINGLY RARE—APPROACH

Encouraging congregants to serve using their unique vocational skills by volunteering in a ministry or nonprofit that is advancing the kingdom is not a particularly innovative idea. It makes much common sense. After all, it holds obvious promise for the servants. If they already enjoy their profession, it’s not surprising they’d find pleasure in donating those skills to ministries—just like Dan Blevins has. It is also a good idea in terms of needs commonly cited by nonprofit organizations. In April 2009, the Deloitte consulting firm released a study reporting that 95 percent of nonprofit leaders say their organizations desire more pro bono services by professionals. While they appreciate volunteers who can help them provide direct services (tutoring kids, cleaning up polluted rivers, serving meals), their greater need is for skilled professionals who can assist them in strengthening their organizational structures so that they can be effective and sustainable.⁷

Findings from a 2004 study by the Urban Institute were similar. It reported that nonprofit organizations are seeking greater numbers of volunteers with specialized skills.⁸ Yet despite the fact that this kind of service would be of obvious benefit to both the server and the served, most congregations have no specific, intentional focus or programs to identify their congregants’ occupational skills and match those to serving opportunities.

The reasons why vary. Understanding them helps position church leaders to overcome barriers to implementing pathway two. The reasons boil down to two basic types: administrative and attitudinal.

With regard to administration, some churches do not use any sort of database to gather information on their parishioners. Consequently, they do not collect vocational information that could be useful in matching members to relevant volunteer opportunities. In churches that do use database programs, it is rare that occupational or skills data is collected. Moreover, even churches with ministries focused on equipping the laity sometimes fail to utilize assessment tools that specifically identify members’ vocational skills and expertise. In all these cases, church staff don’t know much about the wealth of professional skills resident in their congregation.

The second reason many churches do not support vocational stewardship along pathway two is fear. Some clergy are not enthusiastic about helping their members to plug in to service opportunities best suited for their skills when those opportunities are *outside* the church’s own programs. As veteran church consultant Sue Mallory laments, “The average church in America has the mindset of scarcity, not the mindset of abundance.” Church leaders, she reports, often feel they do not have enough support for getting the church’s work done and so there is reluctance to “send people out.”⁹

Gordon Murphy from the Barnabas Group, a parachurch ministry that seeks to connect Christian marketplace professionals with Chicago’s inner-city nonprofits, agrees. He reports that some clergy are fearful about losing resources:

I’ve tried to meet with dozens of pastors, and they just don’t seem interested. . . . They’re afraid if they start referring their sheep out, even though [nonprofits] might use their skill set better, they have this sense: “Well, then I’m going to lose the sheep. Even though I’m not using the sheep

well, they'll like [the outside nonprofit] more than they'll like me and they'll give their time, talent and money to them and they won't give it to our church."¹⁰

For nearly forty years, author and church consultant William Diehl has been a voice crying in the wilderness about these problems. With their internal focus on building the institution of the church, clergy are reluctant to scatter the flock out into serving opportunities in the community, he says. Some years ago he was invited to teach a course at Princeton Theological Seminary on the ministry of the laity. Initially excited, he ended up disappointed. He recalls, "As we progressed, it was very clear to me that what the students were looking for in taking the course was a better understanding of the laity so that they could better use them in serving the church institution. And that was all they got out of it. I might as well have taught a course on how to use audiovisual equipment."¹¹

OVERCOMING THE OBSTACLES TO PATHWAY 2 INITIATIVES

Overcoming administrative obstacles. Congregational leaders have pioneered four strategies for overcoming administrative obstacles: implementing new technology; rethinking traditional approaches to engaging volunteers; partnering with a local "volunteer clearinghouse"; and providing formal coaching.

First, at Grace Community Church in Noblesville, Indiana, leaders have implemented new technology by establishing a web-based portal called "Serving Central."¹² There, under the "Find Your Fit . . ." tab, congregants can select from a long checklist skills that they possess and are interested in using in ministry. The search engine then produces a list of serving opportunities (at home and abroad) matched to those skills.¹³

Lifefridge Christian Church in Longmont, Colorado, has taken a similar approach. Congregants complete a volunteer interest form online that asks detailed questions about their vocational and avocational skills.¹⁴ Staff and ministry leaders then review the information on the form and make recommendations to each member about relevant serving opportunities at the church or with one of its "glocal" partners (domestic and foreign agencies with which Lifefridge collaborates).

A second strategy for overcoming administrative obstacles involves rethinking traditional approaches to volunteer engagement. Many churches

encourage members to serve on short-term missions trips abroad or at home. Beyond medical missions trips, though, few of these short-term experiences are deliberately designed by vocation. As a result, congregants send their bankers and architects out to paint houses and their artists and police officers to serve in Vacation Bible Schools. This isn't necessarily bad, and it can be a lot of fun. But some professionals in the pews are hungry for something different.

At Grace Community, Ed Fischer, a layman who has worked in the IT field for twenty years, has helped coordinate "geek trips" to the congregation's partner ministry, Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology. The seminary was eager to receive IT professionals who could teach short software classes as well as repair and upgrade computers and networks. Ed says he has loved coordinating the trips over the past several years. "Lots of times churches offer medical missions trips or serving in building projects," he says. "But there is a lot of value in creating vocational type trips. It's a great way to engage people that otherwise might not think of going on a short-term trip."¹⁵

Just as many congregations sponsor short-term missions trips, many host an annual ministry fair to expose congregants to volunteer service opportunities. With a little tweaking, this familiar event can become a vehicle for encouraging vocational stewardship along pathway two.

Leaders of a ministry fair could consider composing a vocationally oriented "Want Ads" booklet to pass out to congregants who attend. To create it, the fair organizer asks each ministry showcased at the fair to identify three or four serving opportunities *by skill set or occupation*. These are written up succinctly, such as "WANTED: Marketing or advertising professionals to help create new promotional brochure for our tutoring ministry" or "WANTED: Engineers or scientists with skills in water purification or wastewater technologies to help serve in our disaster relief efforts."¹⁶

To get maximum benefit from their ministry fair, church leaders would inform the congregation ahead of time that the booklet would be available and encourage church members to be thinking about specific vocational skills they might be interested in donating to a ministry.

A third strategy for overcoming obstacles in pathway two involves partnering with a local "volunteer clearinghouse" that can help the church match its professionals to serving opportunities. This is the approach Re-

deemer Presbyterian Church in New York City has taken through its close relationship with Hope for New York (HFNY).

Redeemer launched HFNY roughly twenty years ago. The church was teeming with young professionals in their twenties and thirties—energetic, career-focused singles excited by Pastor Tim Keller’s vision of a church “for the city.” Redeemer measures its success not just by church growth but also by the difference the congregation is making in the city. To facilitate that mission, Redeemer started HFNY to develop relationships with Christian nonprofits serving the city’s poor and marginalized and then connect Redeemer congregants with them.

Over time, HFNY established relationships with over thirty affiliates. It supports these organizations through grants, coaching and its Professionals in Action program, through which Redeemer congregants donate their skills to build capacity in the nonprofits.

Elise Chong, HFNY’s executive director, reports that “throughout the years, our affiliates have been constantly asking for professionals. Web developers are a fairly common request, or ‘someone to do some marketing for me’—creating tools or marketing plans or a marketing brochure.”¹⁷ In response to these needs, HFNY’s Professionals in Action program mobilizes volunteer teams with professional skills to complete short-term, pro bono projects for organizations serving the poor and marginalized.¹⁸ Volunteers typically serve from one to three months. The team approach builds in accountability and ensures better results. “If Mary for some reason can’t attend that night’s meeting, at least Joe and Sally can do it,” Chong explains. “So the project actually continues and completes, and you get a really good product at the end.”

Fellowship Bible Church in Little Rock, Arkansas, has instituted the fourth strategy for encouraging vocational stewardship along pathway two: formal coaching. This congregation is interested in facilitating long-term serving investments by marketplace professionals from the church. To do so, Fellowship hired Bill Wellons as its “release pastor.” Bill pours his life into high-capacity, middle-aged leaders in the church who are ready to free up considerable amounts of time to pursue service in the kingdom.

Bill describes his work as a coach to these congregants in detail in *Unlimited Partnership*, a flipbook he wrote with Lloyd Reeb of Halftime.¹⁹

Sometimes Bill’s coaching involves cheerleading and encouragement. Sometimes it’s about helping talented parishioners navigate church and ministry subcultures and bureaucracies. Sometimes it’s providing spiritual care. Almost always, a key part of the coaching is helping marketplace leaders identify the transferable skills and knowledge they have.

Because of Bill’s investment, several marketplace leaders from Fellowship have given themselves to intensive volunteer staff roles at the church or to deep engagements on behalf of organizations at home and abroad. For example, successful pharmaceutical sales representative James Saunders is giving ten hours a week as the lay leader of Fellowship’s men’s ministry. He has honed leadership skills for years in his industry, identifying talented individuals and mentoring them into successful salespeople. Motivating others and building teams energizes him. He uses these same skills now to recruit leaders for men’s small groups and to enfold non-Christian business executives in the activities of the men’s ministry.²⁰

Overcoming fear with faith. Many church leaders fear that releasing congregants to agencies outside the congregation will leave the church itself bereft of the human and financial resources it requires. Leaders must conquer this fear if they are to implement vocational stewardship along pathway two. They will need to grow in trusting that God is able to ensure that all his work—inside and outside the four walls of the church—gets done when leaders are faithful to the equipping mandate he has given them in Ephesians 4:11-12. Clergy must believe that God will bless them for being open-handed with the talents resident in their congregation. It’s a matter of banking on the promise Ecclesiastes 11:1 offers: “Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it again.” This text encourages generosity in the confidence that, by God’s gracious design, it will produce return blessing.

This vision for producing open-handedness among pastors may sound unrealistic. But it can and has been done. Vernon and Charlene Armitage from Pleasant Valley Baptist Church are living demonstrations. They believe that members’ gifts are not given solely for “church work,” but for the kingdom. “Equipping is building the Body but also a kingdom thing,” Vernon says. “A good healthy church ought to be serving the community.”²¹ His wife, Charlene, says, “We’re not interested in people filling roles, but in roles fulfilling people.” Their passion and strategic deploy-

ment may be outside the four walls of the church, but, she says, “we hold that up as extremely important.”²²

When asked if she was afraid that encouraging service out in the community would leave the church short on volunteers or money to fill its own needs, Charlene admits that she and Vernon did have those fears years ago. The turning point came in 2002 when Don Simmons visited Pleasant Valley to teach them on equipping. Charlene says that he persuaded them of the biblical vision for externally focused churches. She says she came to see that Pleasant Valley was being “selfish” by not sharing its talents with the community.

Since that time, Pleasant Valley has sent out hundreds of its people. For example, recently some master gardeners in the congregation launched a community gardens initiative. It now engages more than one hundred people in some seventy-five gardens all over the city, growing produce shared with the hungry and sold at affordable prices through community farmers markets. In addition, Charlene has mobilized educators from the church to serve local public schools. She herself serves on the school board. This arises from both her personal passion (she was an educator for thirty years) and her desire to model service in the community to her fellow congregants. “They need to see that that’s just as valued as singing in the choir,” she says.²³

And what was the result for Pleasant Valley Baptist Church? “We discovered, the more we went outside the church, the more the inside of our church was taken care of,” Charlene says. “That was not what we expected at all! It’s just very much like what Jesus said: ‘Get outside of yourself.’”

As Pleasant Valley engaged in more partnerships with parachurch ministries and participated in multichurch outreach efforts throughout the city, more unchurched people started attending the church. This energized the congregants—and made congregants more willing to serve inside the church, even in the nursery, to meet the needs of newcomers. Charlene adds, “The best way I know how to say it is, ‘You go out of your self and your self will be taken care of.’”

At Fellowship Bible, the commitment to coaching high-capacity congregants for service *anywhere*—inside or outside the church—is facilitated by Senior Pastor Robert Lewis’s “catch and release” philosophy. “Our people have a desire to do frontline ministry themselves, and they want their

church to help them do it,” he says.²⁴ Unfortunately, most pastors have a “catch and keep” philosophy, Lewis acknowledges. In the earlier days of his ministry, this was his approach. It only changed as he began to study more carefully the leadership modeled by Jesus. Lewis says that Jesus was a “catch-and-release fisherman. He would catch men and women with His gospel, and spend time with them to develop, season, and ground them in God’s ways, but then He’d release them.” He gave them over “to be salt and light, and to change the community.”²⁵

At Mariners Church in Irvine, California, Outreach Pastor Laurie Beshore has seen the Ecclesiastes promise of bread returning come true. She and other leaders at Mariners came alongside congregant Don Schoendorfer, a mechanical engineer who’d volunteered for years at the church’s inner-city tutoring center. Don got passionate about the problem of immobility faced by millions of disabled people in the developing world. He believed his more than twenty-five years of experience as an engineer might offer a solution.

Don took on the challenge of creating a wheelchair that would be adequate to the demanding environmental conditions of Third World countries and that could be manufactured at an affordable price. He bought a bicycle and some white plastic lawn chairs at one of Southern California’s big-box stores. After “tinkering in the garage” for several weeks, he’d constructed a sturdy, usable wheelchair. Today his wheelchair design has brought mobility to more than half a million people in the developing world.²⁶

Laurie Beshore says that one of the highlights now on many Mariners short-term mission trips abroad is the opportunity to assemble and distribute wheelchairs. The experience deeply touches trip members and is often used by God to deepen their compassion for the poor, she reports. That affects their own walk with Christ and has led to stronger engagement at Mariners and its local ministries.

CONCLUSION: THE BLESSINGS OF PATHWAY 2

As we’ve seen, facilitating pathway two may require congregational leaders to make some changes in both their attitudes and their administrative structures. Change is never easy, and it doesn’t happen without significant motivation. For those active in vocational stewardship along pathway two, the enormous benefits are well worth the effort.

Global and local ministries that receive the time and talents of pro bono professionals obviously benefit. This ought to be of some interest for pastors. But when pastors understand the benefits this pathway brings their own parishioners, that is even more meaningful and motivational. Such benefits are not hard to see.

The first benefit is the deep joy parishioners experience. They discover that it is profoundly rewarding to use their unique, God-given skills to serve others on the frontlines. Consider, for example, the experience of civil engineer Rod Beadle from Chicago. In spring 2010, Rod traveled to Haiti just after the massive earthquake in Port-au-Prince. Reflecting on his three weeks there, he said, "I was putting in clean water systems for some of the [displaced persons] camps and doing waste treatment. That was probably the coolest thing I've ever done professionally."²⁷

Gordon Murphy of Barnabas Group says he has often witnessed "aha" moments when marketplace leaders grasp that their professional skills uniquely qualify them to offer service in a frontline ministry. He says, "When they actually get to use the gift that they are excited about, the gift of communication, the gift of marketing, the gift of whatever—when they get to use *that* gift—it significantly improves the 'wow' factor of the serving experience."²⁸

Service along pathway two has also deepened some congregants' appreciation for believers whose skill sets are much different from their own. For them, it illuminates in fresh ways the truth of 1 Corinthians 12 about the value of all parts of Christ's body. Business consultant Kay Edwards reports that she has been abundantly blessed in this regard through volunteering with S.H.A.L.O.M. ministry, a grass-roots nonprofit in inner-city Milwaukee. She's amazed at the gifts and dedication of its staff. "[They] have no problem walking into a crack house at midnight on a weekend and pulling people out and saying 'Jesus loves you,'" Kay says. "I could *never* do that, never in a million years." Though she couldn't counsel drug addicts, the human resource management expert says, "I *can* run a board."²⁹

Kay's service with S.H.A.L.O.M. has been so transformative she has launched her own initiative, Vesper Services Network, to make matches between professionals like herself and nonprofits who need their talents. "It's such an amazing experience" to rub shoulders with believers of diverse gifts, Kay says. "I wanted other people to have that experience."

Congregants who have donated their vocational skills to ministries also report that they've grown in their appreciation for the unity of Christ's body worldwide. Civil engineer John Rahe has served throughout the developing world on vocationally oriented short-term trips operated by Engineering Ministries International. His experiences have exposed him to the tremendous diversity of the worldwide church. "I've seen the exuberant worship of Africans in Kenya and Ghana, and then I've been to Bangladesh, where the men sit on the floor on one side of the church and the women sit on the other and they worship almost in silence," John says. "Just the richness of being able to see and experience the body of Christ is wonderful." A "dyed-in-the-wool evangelical," he explains that being married to an Orthodox Christian has given him a heart for promoting unity within the body. "We're called to love and respect each other," he says. "It's something God has put on my heart, and it's only become stronger through my association with ministry trips through EMI."³⁰

Finally, and perhaps most importantly for congregational leaders, service along pathway two has sparked spiritual growth in some parishioners. Chicago executive Larry Mollner, who logged more than a million frequent flier miles during a high-powered career in international finance, says that his volunteer service has been the catalyst for making his faith genuine. After years of attending church somewhat mechanically, he now states simply, "I think I now practice my Christian faith in a way that is real and personal."³¹

Larry grew up Catholic and then attended various Protestant churches because his wife was Methodist. Over the years he volunteered at various churches, but the effect of that on him was minimal. Through vocational stewardship along pathway two, he has been able to utilize the outside-the-box thinking skills he honed during his career as director of the Futures Division at Morgan Stanley Dean Witter & Co. "Matching my experience and skill sets to the particular needs of the ministry seeking help is unique and effective," Larry says. "Together we are working for God's kingdom, and that is satisfying and very exciting."

Larry and his friend John Phillips, a retired real estate developer, have been matched through Barnabas Group with an inner-city ministry called Kids Off The Block. Diane Latiker, a resident of the Roseland community on Chicago's South Side, started this grass-roots outreach seven years

ago. In a context where violence and gangs are commonplace, Diane welcomes youth into her modest home for a range of after-school activities and tutoring.

When Larry and John met Diane in 2010, the ministry still operated out of her home. “They’d cleaned out the living room/dining room area to make room for tables, chairs and some computers where kids could work,” Larry says. It was clear that Diane needed organizational help and a better facility to bring the ministry to the next level. John drew on his professional network to locate rental space, and Larry has helped Diane with strategic planning.

Larry says he is no longer just writing checks to support others’ outreach ministries. He’s jumping into his car and driving to the city’s South Side to help offer hope and vision to a generation of at-risk teenagers. He’s building crosscultural relationships and contributing time, treasure and talent to benefit others. Larry says, “Helping others through these programs has changed my life. There are people in need and there are people who want to help. Putting them together is a joy. The results touch my heart. I want to do more. My Bible study has increased. My interest in knowing God has increased. It’s all a part of what I call ‘the new me.’”

Pathway 3

LAUNCH YOUR OWN SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

“The Mavuno Marathon is really the thing that has managed to connect us to our mission here on earth. . . . [We’re] here to change society for the glory of God.”

KANJII MBUGUA

A third avenue of vocational stewardship that congregational leaders can consider facilitating is getting behind the entrepreneurial dreams of high-capacity congregants. Right now, your church may contain some talented marketplace leaders whom God is stirring in an exciting—and perhaps slightly scary—new way. They are actively thinking of leaving their “day job” (or at least carving out significant time in their schedule) to birth a new social enterprise. They dream of implementing a new kingdom endeavor to bless a targeted group or to provide a creative solution to a thorny social problem.

Right now in your congregation, there may be a successful businesswoman wondering if the time is now for her to exit corporate America and pursue her passion: launching a nonprofit agency to provide business coaching and start-up financing to inner-city entrepreneurs. Or perhaps an architect and a real estate developer in your church have dreamed together of doing something significant to address your city’s affordable-housing crisis. In short, right now, God may be planting some big dreams in the hearts of your congregation’s members—dreams that could rejoice your city and that many congregants could rally behind.

- ³“Faith and Work Ministry,” Harbor Presbyterian Church—Downtown (San Diego) <www.harbordowntown.org/get-involved/faith--work-ministry>.
- ⁴All quotes from Duke Kwon, former associate pastor, Grace DC, are from a telephone interview with the author, November 3, 2010.
- ⁵Davida Foy Crabtree, *The Empowering Church: How One Congregation Supports Lay People's Ministries in the World* (Herndon, Va.: The Alban Institute, 1989), p. 6.
- ⁶Additionally, every Labor Day, Yates invites a lay member to preach a sermon on faithfulness in vocation.
- ⁷Visit <www.vocationalstewardship.org> for a copy of Church of the Savior's “Service of Ordination.”
- ⁸Tom Nelson, senior pastor, Christ Community Church, telephone interview with the author, October 21, 2010.
- ⁹Susan Olasky, “An ‘Integral Life’ at Work,” *World*, November 29, 2008 <www.worldmag.com/articles/14692>.
- ¹⁰Ibid.
- ¹¹Ibid.
- ¹²“Work Life at Peachtree,” Peachtree <www.peachtreepres.org/Worklife.aspx>.
- ¹³Victor Pentz, “Soli Deo Gloria: Calling of Peter and the Fisherman Disciples,” Sermon Series: Vintage Jesus (August 31, 2008) <www.peachtreepres.org/downloads/sermons/20080831sermon.pdf>.
- ¹⁴All quotes from Bonnie Worzbacher, senior vice president for Global Customer and Channel Leadership, The Coca-Cola Company, are from a telephone interview with the author, August 25, 2010.
- ¹⁵Center for Faith and Work <www.faithandwork.org>.
- ¹⁶All quotes from Katherine Leary Alsdorf, director, Center for Faith and Work, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, are from a telephone interview with the author, February 6, 2009.
- ¹⁷Fashion Industry Group, Center for Faith and Work <www.faithandwork.org/fashion>.
- ¹⁸“Entrepreneurship Initiative: The Competition,” Center for Faith and Work <www.faithandwork.org/the_competition_page1234.php>.
- ¹⁹Winners have been diverse. Threads Theater Company, a 2007 winner, aims to “start inclusive conversations about faith and contribute to cultural renewal.” A 2009 winner, Alphabet Scoop Ice Cream, provides job training and mentoring in an ice cream shop for at-risk youth. Entrepreneurship Initiative has also helped jump-start initiatives to provide legal aid to those in extreme poverty, jobs in the toy-making industry in Honduras, holistic health care for the underserved on Staten Island and a safe house for victims of sex trafficking.
- ²⁰Duke Kwon, former associate pastor, Grace DC, telephone interview with the author, November 3, 2010. Grace Church launched twelve groups, creating the categories for them inductively based on congregational responses. These included groups for artists, educators, businesspeople, engineers, health care professionals and Capitol Hill staffers, among others.

- ²¹All quotes from Wendy Clark, owner, Carpe Diem, are from a telephone interview with the author's assistant Sally Carlson, September 27, 2010.
- ²²James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 257, emphasis in original.
- ²³Anne C. Bailey, plenary address, Following Christ Conference, Chicago, 2008 (audio file) <<http://media.intervarsity.org/mp3/AnneCBAiley.mp3>>.
- ²⁴Gordon Govier, “InterVarsity Alumni—Anne C. Bailey,” *InterVarsity* (October 16, 2008) <www.intervarsity.org/news/intervarsity-alumni--anne-c-bailey>.
- ²⁵Ibid.
- ²⁶Jeanine Lacquement, founder and director, Children of the Light Dancers, telephone interview with the author, May 16, 2010.
- ²⁷Timothy Stoner, “Milt Kuyers: Redefining Success,” in *My Business, My Mission*, ed. Doug Seebeck and Timothy Stoner (Grand Rapids: Partners Worldwide, 2009), p. 23.
- ²⁸Ibid.
- ²⁹Milt Kuyers, former owner, Star Sprinklers, telephone interview with the author, August 25, 2010.
- ³⁰All quotes from Carlos Oscar, professional comedian, are from a telephone interview with the author, August 10, 2010.
- ³¹Information about Pia Cayetano here is taken from her blog at <www.mydailyrace.com> and website at <www.senatorpiacayetano.com>.
- ³²Interview with Philippines' Senator Pia Cayetano,” *The World of Parliaments*, July 2005, p. 4 <www.ipu.org/PDF/wop/18_en.pdf>.
- ³³“Profile: Bora Aksu,” *Artisan*, vol. 1 <www.artisaninitiatives.org/Publisher/Article.aspx?ID=75333>.
- ³⁴Bonnie Alter, “People Tree Goes Designer,” *Treehugger* (May 10, 2007) <www.treehugger.com/files/2007/05/people_trees_ne.php>.
- ³⁵Ibid.
- ³⁶This account is based on the profile of Schenk in *Entrepreneurs in the Faith Community: Profiles of Mennonites in Business*, ed. Calvin W. Redekop and Benjamin W. Redekop (Scottsdale, Penn.: Herald Press, 1996), pp. 18-38.

Chapter 11: Pathway 2

- ¹Unless otherwise noted, information and quotes from Dan Blevins are from a telephone interview with the author, September 16, 2010.
- ²“Finishers Project Mission Statement,” Finishers Project <<http://finishers.org/index.php?id=75>>.
- ³Quoted in Daniel Blevins, “Baby Boomer Finds New Calling,” *American Family Association Journal* (October 2009) <www.afajournal.org/1009default.asp>.
- ⁴“Volunteering,” Mt. Pisgah Methodist Church (Johns Creek, Ga.) <www.mountpisgah.org/Mission/Volunteering.cfm>.
- ⁵PLACE, a discovery tool that assesses congregant's gifts, talents, skills, life experiences and passions, was developed by Jay McSwain. See <www.placeministries.org>.

⁶Taking the artist-waitress as an example, the first biblical counsel to heed comes from Colossians 3:23-24, about doing all our tasks “as for the Lord.” The waitress should ask for God’s help in offering excellent customer service and in being a punctual, hardworking and honest employee. She should seek to love and serve her co-workers. She could also brainstorm with friends as to how, despite her modest position, she could advance kingdom values—such as peace, beauty, justice, sustainability or community—in and through her work. For example, if the restaurant is small and family owned, she may be able to talk to the owners about buying local produce as an expression of environmental stewardship. If it is part of a large chain, her boss may not have a lot of scope for making such a decision. In this instance, the waitress might suggest a different sort of activity, such as a training session for wait staff in effective ways to deal with nasty customers. Perhaps a counselor, or a person with conflict resolution skills, from the waitress’s home congregation, could be invited in to give a short presentation on this topic. In this small way, the waitress can contribute to promoting the kingdom value of peace at her workplace.

Meanwhile, since her true calling is as an artist, she might consider what actions she could take to promote beauty in the way the food is presented or the manner in which the restaurant is decorated. Or she may be able to volunteer her services to decorate the restrooms or brighten up the landscaping outside the restaurant. Perhaps she could even convince the restaurant’s owner to allow her to use the facility occasionally, when it is closed, to give art classes to disadvantaged children.

⁷Aaron Hurst, “Making the Most of a Wave of Volunteers,” *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, June 4, 2009 <<http://philanthropy.com/article/Making-the-Most-of-a-Wave-of/57445>>.

⁸Mark A. Hager, “Volunteer Management Capacity in America’s Charities and Congregations: A Briefing Report,” Urban Institute, Washington, D.C., 2004, p. 19.

⁹Sue Mallory, assistant stated clerk of the session, Brentwood Presbyterian Church, Los Angeles, telephone interview with the author, August 11, 2010.

¹⁰Gordon Murphy, managing partner, The Barnabas Group Chicago, telephone interview with the author, April 7, 2010.

¹¹William Diehl, *Thank God, It’s Monday!* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), pp. 191-92.

¹²“Serving Central,” Grace Community Church <<http://gracecc.org/serve/serving-central>>.

¹³I found two parachurch ministries that also deploy this sort of technology. Mission Finder has this model on its “Vocational Missions Opportunities” page. See <www.missionfinder.org/level2.htm>. (A drop-down menu allows a user to select his or her vocational skill area. The site then generates a list of nonprofit ministries looking for volunteers with that or a similar skill.) Serving in Mission uses a similar approach on its site, at a page labeled “Missions By Your Career.” See <www.sim.org/index.php/career>.

¹⁴“Glocal: Externally Focused Ministries,” Lifebridge Christian Church <<http://lbcc.org/externallyfocused>>.

¹⁵Ed Fischer, telephone interview with the author, September 2, 2010. Other churches too have started implementing vocationally based short-term missions trips. The River Church in San Jose, California, sends professional teams to support Paz y Esperanza, a Peruvian ministry active in fighting child sexual abuse. “We try to bring over people who have best practices in law enforcement, criminal prosecution, the psychology area and Christian community activism,” coordinator Pete Snell reports. Last year, for example, the team included four forensic nurses, an ex-cop, some interpreters and a businessman. (Pete Snell, telephone interview with the author, August 31, 2010.) Northwood Church in Keller, Texas, sponsors numerous vocationally based short-term missions trips to its partners in Vietnam and Mexico. Its 2011 trips calendar included specific opportunities for medical professionals, educators, businesspeople, athletes, carpenters and people with expertise in the care of special-needs children. Northwood’s senior pastor Bob-Roberts Jr. has written about such efforts in his book, *Real-Time Connections: Linking Your Job with God’s Global Work* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), p. 123. See also the “Glocal” section of the church’s website at <http://northwoodchurch.org/glocal_ministry.php?id=13>.

¹⁶Alternatively, the fair coordinator could collect all the want ads and then cluster them by skill set, and create several one-page sheets (in different colors) by vocational skill. For example, one sheet would list all the ministries (with their booth numbers) that had indicated a need for people with various sorts of business skills. Another sheet would list all the ministries that indicated they had serving opportunities for people in the creative arts. A third would list the ministries that indicated some kind of need for communications professionals.

¹⁷Unless otherwise noted, all quotes from Elise Chong are from a telephone interview with the author, July 14, 2010.

¹⁸“Professionals in Action,” Hope for New York <<http://hfnny.org/volunteer/professionals-in-action>>.

¹⁹Bill Wellons and Lloyd Reeb, *Unlimited Partnership: Igniting a Marketplace Leader’s Journey to Significance* (Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2006).

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

²¹Vernon Armitage, “Defining Moments: Volunteerism,” audio CD produced by Willow Creek North, July 2009.

²²Charlene Armitage, director of equipping, Pleasant Valley Baptist Church, telephone interview with the author, August 24, 2010.

²³This and the following quotes from Charlene Armitage are from personal correspondence with the author, November 28, 2010.

²⁴Robert Lewis, “What to do with Talented People,” *Innovation 2007: Connecting Innovators to Multiply* (Leadership Network, 2007), p. 42 <http://leadnet.org/resources/download/innovation_2007>.

²⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

²⁶Don Schoendorfer, founder and president, Free Wheelchair Mission, interview with the author, Irvine, Calif., July 8, 2009.

- ²⁷Rod Beadle, president and founder, Engineering Resources Association, telephone interview with the author, July 21, 2010.
- ²⁸Gordon Murphy, managing partner, The Barnabas Group Chicago, telephone interview with the author, April 7, 2010.
- ²⁹All quotes from Kay Edwards, president and CEO, Vesper Services Network, are from a telephone interview with the author, August 13, 2010.
- ³⁰John Rahe, president, Rahe Engineering, telephone interview with the author, July 22, 2010.
- ³¹All quotes from Larry Mollner are from an interview with the author, Glencoe, Ill., June 30, 2010.

Chapter 12: Pathway 3

- ¹All quotes from Muriithi Wanjau are from an interview with the author, Nairobi, January 20, 2010.
- ²Simon Mbevi, director, Transform Kenya, presentation at Mavuno Church, Nairobi, January 22, 2010.
- ³Unless otherwise noted, all quotes from Daisy Waimiri are from an interview with the author, Nairobi, January 20, 2010.
- ⁴All quotes from Linda Ochola Adolwa, associate pastor, Mavuno Church, are from an interview with the author, Nairobi, January 20, 2010.
- ⁵All quotes from Anne Nzilani, founder and CEO, Bawa la Tumaini, are from an interview with the author, Nairobi, January 20, 2010.
- ⁶All quotes from Kanjii Mbugua, CEO, Kijiji Records, are from an interview with the author, Nairobi, January 20, 2010.
- ⁷I've included Kanjii's story in this pathway three chapter because it emerged out of Mavuno Church. However, in Kanjii's case, the influence of the Mavuno Marathon didn't result in a new social enterprise; they did not create a new organization. Instead, they created new programs within their business. In this way they've acted as what Tim Keller has called "intrapreneuers"—innovative people who do new things to bring about reform in their industry sector. But they do it from inside existing organizations rather than by starting new ones.
- ⁸All quotes from Ken Oloo are from his presentation at Mavuno Church, Nairobi, January 22, 2010.

Chapter 13: Pathway 4

- ¹This church's story is told in Samuel G. Freedman, *Upon This Rock: The Miracles of a Black Church* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1994).
- ²See Krista Petty, "Calvary Chapel Fort Lauderdale, FL: A Model of Cause-Related Community Involvement," UrbanMinistry.org (2007) <www.urbanministry.org/files/Calvary_Chapel_Florida_FINAL.pdf>.
- ³I've had the privilege of learning of these churches and ministries—New Song Baltimore, Lawndale Community Church, Bethel New Life, Joy of Jesus and FCS Urban Ministries—through my involvement with the Christian Community Development Association. Visit <www.ccda.org>.

- ⁴Unless otherwise noted, the following quotes from Mike Honeycutt, former senior pastor, Southwood Presbyterian Church, are from a telephone interview with the author, October 15, 2010.
- ⁵Mike Honeycutt, "Shepherding Change in the Local Congregation," *Leadership: Succeeding in the Private, Public, and Not-for-Profit Sectors*, ed. Ronald R. Sims and Scott A. Quatro (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 2005), pp. 143-51.
- ⁶Unless otherwise noted, this and the following quotes from Mike Stanfield, president, Ducommun, are from a telephone interview with the author, October 7, 2010.
- ⁷Mark Stearns, director of Mercy Ministries, Southwood Presbyterian Church, quoted in "A Journey to Remember," Lincoln Village Ministry <www.lincolnvillageministry.com/Home.html>.
- ⁸Amy L. Sherman, "Enlarging Worlds: Huntsville's Southwood PCA 'Adopts' Strapped Elementary School—And Its Families," *Equip for Ministry*, November/December 2005, p. 7.
- ⁹Ibid., p. 8.
- ¹⁰Liz Clemons, director, James A. Lane Unit of the Alabama Boys & Girls Club, telephone interview with the author, October 14, 2010.
- ¹¹Yvonne Henry, a teacher at Lincoln Elementary School, quoted in Jennifer Pyron, "Teaching and Learning Better Together," *Working Toward Excellence: The Journal of the Alabama Best Practices Center* 8, no. 1 (Fall 2008): 15.
- ¹²From Lincoln Elementary's application for the 2010 Panasonic National School Change competition.
- ¹³Sherman, "Enlarging Worlds," p. 8.
- ¹⁴Unless otherwise noted, all quotes from Mark Stearns, director of Mercy Ministries, Southwood Presbyterian Church, are from a telephone interview with the author, September 16, 2010.
- ¹⁵Quoted in Kari Hawkins, "Opening doors: Church groups find ways to revitalize community, families," *Huntsville Times*, August 5, 2005.
- ¹⁶Ibid.
- ¹⁷Sherman, "Enlarging Worlds," p. 8.
- ¹⁸All quotes from Frank Six, university affairs officer, Marshall Space Flight Center, are from a telephone interview with the author, October 18, 2010.
- ¹⁹"A Journey to Remember," Lincoln Village Ministry (video) <www.lincolnvillageministry.com/Home.html>.
- ²⁰Sherman, "Enlarging Worlds," p. 9.
- ²¹All quotes from Margaret Powell, intervention specialist, Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School, are from a telephone interview with author, October 8, 2010.
- ²²Quoted in Pyron, "Lincoln's Powerful Community Partnership," *Working Toward Excellence: The Journal of the Alabama Best Practices Center* 8, no. 1 (Fall 2008): 14.
- ²³Derek Simpson, partner, Warren and Simpson PC, telephone interview with the author, October 13, 2010.
- ²⁴"Journey to Remember."