

# FOUR MODELS FOR TRANSFORMING MARKETPLACE LEADERS INTO KINGDOM LEADERS

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How Churches Are Helping Successful Businesspeople Move into Significant Ministry

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*by Alexis Wilson*

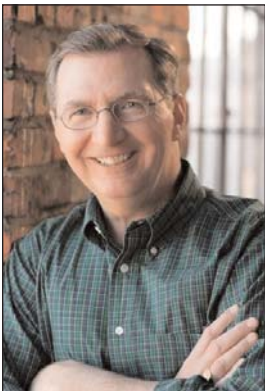
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They are sitting in the pews on Sunday, alert to the sermon and open to how it applies to their lives. They may volunteer once to help with a youth program or host a dinner at their home. They are physically present and relatively engaged, but they have yet to find a place of service; in fact, they might not be actively looking for one. “They” are marketplace leaders, individuals who have achieved community stature and measurable success in business ventures. While they count themselves as members of the church, they are sometimes left behind with traditional service opportunities. To leverage the influence and margin of these leaders, churches are engaging them in new ways, releasing them to pursue their passions and to make an indelible mark on the kingdom.

### An Honest Self-Assessment

Twelve years ago, Jim and Connie Phillips were convinced that God was telling them to help children in the Little Rock, AR, public schools. They took their four children out of private schools and put them into the public system in order to get a bird’s eye view of the situation. After a year, they had managed to develop a relationship with the middle school principal, raised up 10 volunteers and a meager budget, and had instituted a mentoring program for students called Excel. Today, this couple runs a corporation called Excel, which operates on a half million-dollar budget and is in 31 central Arkansas schools, with more than 1,000 people working in the mentoring program through 125 churches.



ROBERT LEWIS

Robert Lewis, pastor-at-large of Little Rock’s **Fellowship Bible Church** ([www.fbclr.org](http://www.fbclr.org)), beams while telling the Phillips’ story, as it reflects one of his greatest

passions—discovering the talents and dreams within the body of Christ and unleashing them. The church didn’t start the Excel ministry, he says, but instead, the church encouraged the Phillips to follow their passions. “Even from a secular standpoint, people want to be able to do things for themselves” he says. “Think about the Home

Depot slogan, ‘You can do it, we can help.’ That serves notice on all of us, but especially church leaders, that people have a desire to do things for themselves, and they need our support to get there. Unfortunately, I didn’t think that way in the early days of our church. Our slogan was, ‘We, the church, can do it! You come and help us.’

“Our church was primarily a helping institution to people,” he says. “People enjoyed being here. They would encounter Christ, receive help as parents, help with their marriages, their work, their hurts, their bad habits, or whatever. The more people who came, the more we helped and equipped—the activity never ended. But at some point I saw that caring was not enough.”

Robert realized a change needed to happen, but “as a pastor, I had no clue what to do,” he says. “I didn’t even have a language to talk about it.” First he consulted the Scripture, where he read Mark 3:14, “And He chose 12, that they might be with Him, and that He might then send them away to preach.” It was there Robert decided what he needed to lead his church to do: “I realized, that caring for people needed to give way to sending them out!” he says.

His next step was to go to the people of his congregation. “Proverbs 27:23 tells us that we should know the condition of our flocks and pay close attention to our herds. So we conducted a survey to find out exactly where we were and what our people were experiencing.” The leadership discovered that when people joined the church, they would be content for about five years, but then start to get restless and even bored. By the seventh year, no matter how much stimulation the church provided, boredom and discontentment had settled in for many.

### Jesus as Catch-and-Release Fisherman

“If you fish, you know that if you put a fish in a bucket of water, eventually it runs out of oxygen. You can pipe in music, provide a light show, even provide companion fish, but after a while, it’s still going belly up,” Robert says. “Fish are meant for the river, where there is adventure and opportunity to live and grow, not staying in what fishermen call the live well. Unless you intend to eat them, fish need to be released.”

He went back to the Scriptures, and he realized he needed the message Pharaoh heard from Moses, “Let my people go!” With that in mind, Robert began combing the New Testament for passages about releasing people. “The truth is, Jesus was a catch-and-release fisherman,” he says. “He would catch, develop and keep them for a season, but then there came a time when he released them.”

Taking a lead from Jesus’ model, he knew church leadership had to change the way it thought about its mission. “Catch and *keep* is our comfort zone,” says Robert. “My natural response to people complaining or growing restless is to provide them more events, more stimulation. That’s what many in today’s churches are feeling. If you follow that song and dance pattern too long, you become superficial and lose the substance. You wear out your staff, and you lose your best people. You’ll always have the faithful few, but in every congregation is another type of person—the real creative, energetic person with ideas and passions of their own to do something significant for the kingdom.

“Jesus spent three years with his disciples. Imagine if he’d stayed another 10 years. At some point, someone—probably Peter—would have said, ‘Hey, is there anything we can do?’ I have no doubt that would have been the case. On the other hand, do you think they were ready to be released after only three years? They were scared to death, but the Lord knew they were ready. He knew they didn’t need the live well anymore—they needed the river. They were clumsy at times, but they also made an impact—and in time, they changed the world.”

In his best-selling book *Halftime: Changing Your Game Plan from Success to Significance*, Bob Buford discusses how people moving into the second half of life can utilize the success of the first half to pursue significant work. “The Halftime movement may be a small percentage of the landscape,” Robert says, “but Bob’s book conveys the message many people are thinking: those who are more fortunate than most have a unique opportunity to consider more options than just work, but whatever they choose, they want to do it themselves. They want hands-on experience in being a difference maker. Most powerful influencers are not going to join the worship team

or teach Sunday school classes. Most often, they are going to go to someone outside the church to use them, unless we, as church leaders, give them options.”

### Creating a “Release Pastor”

Having established the need for change that involved releasing people to do ministry, the Fellowship leadership then went to the people and began asking how they wanted to be released. From a man who wanted to help the poor to a couple who wanted to help inner-city kids have a summer-camp experience, “we had scores of people come forward with ideas. Some were quirky but others were brilliant,” Robert says.

“We had a doctor who was the chief of staff at a local hospital,” Robert says. “He had gone through a life changing divorce in medical school, and he wanted to find a way to teach preventative life skills to medical school students. He challenged the local medical school, but it wasn’t until he got involved personally that something happened. He brought in the vice president of Merrill Lynch to teach the medical students a course on investments, and an Arkansas Supreme Court Justice to teach about medical litigation. From there, the program blossomed. Today, there are 40 classes offered each year to senior medical students and a similar program has been instituted at the law school. Those are the kinds of things that happened. We were looking for the kamikazes, the people who were willing to throw themselves into great things. From within this group came Jim and Connie Phillips, who needed only the encouragement to proceed. “First, they had to have permission to do it,” he says.

“Now, we have a whole new group of people at our church who have a different mindset. Theirs is the river. Your people will figure out ways to advance God’s kingdom—they just need your permission to go find them.”

In order to keep these people connected to the church, Fellowship recently restructured and allocated part of its budget for a “release pastor.” This person, while a staff member, works directly with those doing ministry outside of the church walls. “He is the lifeline to the kingdom builder.

He doesn't control," Robert says, "but he supports, consults, validates, and cheers.

"We don't need revolutionaries leaving our churches—as George Barna predicts will happen—we need revolutionary churches," he says. "We need to adopt a growth mindset, to be wise enough to create an auxiliary staff to pull people out of the church to go be the church, but who are still connected to the church."

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Robert also says the efforts of these kingdom builders need to be celebrated and recognized. "We are now in the business of applauding the fruit our people bear through their own kingdom initiatives out in the community. It's

the principle of salt and light. In his first sermon, Jesus told us that we are the salt of the earth, the light of the world. During the first part of my tenure at Fellowship, we had a great light, but I think that light was under a bowl. It was happening on Sunday, in small groups, on retreats, but no one in the community was seeing it. You didn't see the church in the newspaper or on the news. The community said not one word about the church. A local publication in our city published a magazine entitled, *Little Rock: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know*. It had more than 110 informative pages about our city and yet, the church was nowhere to be found in it. We were completely left out. Jesus would say we were under a bowl.

"Jesus said in Matthew 5:16, 'Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.' The community will see your good works, and the community will praise God because of it. The church of the future has got to be in the megaphones of society.

"Can you imagine what would happen if churches across the country had staff people who were equipping, launching, supporting and cheering for its 'best fish' to go change the world?"

## Finding the Best Fish

Although a novice fisherman can experience beginner's luck, it is most often the experienced fisherman who brings home the best catch. The same applies when churches utilize purposeful planning. Churches across the country are getting more deliberate about finding these best fish, these kingdom builders, these community innovators, these market leaders. While many systems exist, four distinct models have risen as methods for determining, developing and deploying such leaders.

"We have found many churches that are excited about marketplace ministry," said Wayne Smith, director of Marketplace Success/Kingdom Significance Leadership Communities for Leadership Network. "The concept was born out of our Halftime emphasis, and we began retooling it so that it would be accessible to pastors who could use it to find the people in their churches who have experienced some level of success. These pastors want to understand more about how to draw on the strength of the people in the room." As Leadership Network has studied the work these churches do and how they do it, Wayne has seen four models emerge:

- **Culture/DNA:** Churches that work from this model have marketplace leadership built into their very nature. Market leaders organically assume leadership within the church—they really know no other way.
- **Partnership:** The model involves collaborative work between a church and a nonprofit organization. They share resources and opportunities and are able to capitalize on each other's strengths.
- **External Opportunities:** These churches are looking for opportunities to develop ministry outside the church walls, where they also find the people who have the vision to create and run them.
- **Internal Development:** The fourth model includes churches that are developing marketplace leaders who are already in their congregations and guiding these people into opportunities for making an impact.

## Culture/DNA Model

Locating the market leaders at **Heartland Community Church** ([www.hearthland.cc](http://www.hearthland.cc)) in Rockford, IL, is an uncomplicated process, as the church's senior ministers themselves include marketplace leaders. Heartland was co-founded by Mark Bankord, who is CEO of a fund management group and also serves as the church's directional leader. "We broke down the role of the senior pastor," says Gordy Smith, director of adult ministries, "which allows us to work in the sweet spot of spiritual giftedness and trust, rather than within a strict hierarchy." Mark is the directional leader, Gordy is a teaching pastor, and co-founder Doug Thiesen, who was previously a worship pastor, is the church's lead pastor and worship leader. Other marketplace leaders fill top positions, such as Mike Teuscher, a dentist who leads the care and compassion ministries of the church while maintaining his full-time dental practice. Another, Dave Odling, a local



GORDY SMITH



DOUG THIESEN

CPA works 20 to 30 hours a week as the church's treasurer. "He helps track our financial future," Gordy says. "Dave is more like a controller and a financial strategist. We benefit tremendously from his gifts. Mike is a marketplace volunteer who actually is in a position to supervise several of our paid staff.

WHAT'S MOST SURPRISING TO OUR STAFF IS THAT IF WE FIND SOMETHING THEY DON'T DO WELL, WE GIVE IT TO SOMEONE ELSE.

"Most of our leadership team does not come from formal ministry training, but they are called to the work they do. Not one position on staff is sacred. If we have a void, we fill it with the person who's right to lead it. We consider

four important things: character, competency, chemistry and call, which is a critical factor. All of our job descriptions are in pencil. We observe what people do well, and we move them toward their giftedness. What's most surprising to our staff is that if we find something they don't do well, we give it to someone else," Gordy says.

With marketplace leaders at the helm, recruiting others to be part of ministry seems natural to the church leadership. "Because Mark has found a way to balance his work, family and ministry, he can go to other marketplace leaders and ask them to rearrange their lives to be part of the work happening at Heartland," Gordy says. "They respond because they know we're serious about using their gifts and giving them a real place to serve."

The church has undertaken many different initiatives to help people assess where they might be able to serve. They encourage every person to go through "Get in the Game," a seminar designed to help people discover their spiritual gifts and consider serving in that area of giftedness. "We looked at many different assessment tools (and ended up creating our own), with one goal in mind: Quickly connecting people to their gifts, and getting them into serving opportunities," Gordy says. Get in the Game helps people not only identify their spiritual gifts, but also discover their passions, distinguish between skills, talents and gifts, and it helps them explore serving opportunities at Heartland in the area of that giftedness.

"We've created a culture of moving people toward giftedness," says Doug Thiesen, "and we've learned to hold onto people with a light touch, moving them where they need to be. We have learned the benefits of releasing people into the area of their passion."

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Heartland has also worked out a system for clarifying roles in any new projects. "We hold 'dream meetings' to talk about initiatives being launched in our church and community, and we outline exactly what people should and shouldn't expect from the church when they have ideas for new ministries," Gordy says. "That allows us to keep communication open and clear."

In order to continually develop and encourage their leadership, Heartland participates in the Willow Creek Leadership Summit, an event "dedicated to strengthening and sharpening



leadership gifts and abilities.” The church board and some members attended for many years, and three years ago, they learned the sessions were being made available on video. “Rather than taking a small group to the summit, a few months later, we hosted one of our own, which we called Leadership Summit Rewind,” Gordy says. “We invited anyone leading in our church, and we also invited in some marketplace leaders. We edited down some of the video content and customized it for Heartland. At the first meeting, we had 200 people show up.

“We broke into ministry teams to do immediate application, and we told the market leaders to sit with a group whose subject matter was of interest,” Gordy says. “In the context of the session, they got a glimpse into our passions, and we got a look at their leadership horsepower. We then had an opportunity to expand our ministry.

Integrating marketplace leaders into church leadership keeps the ministry at Heartland thriving. “We model marketplace leaders getting into the game at every level of ministry and leadership throughout the church,” Gordy says. “We use many different tools—Men’s Fraternity ([www.mensfraternity.com](http://www.mensfraternity.com)), Leadership Summit Rewind, Get in the Game—to get marketplace leaders plugged in and moving toward further alignment and greater fulfillment in their service.”

### Partnership Model

Dave Geenens had been involved with other churches and many nonprofits, but when he arrived at **Indian Creek Community Church** ([www.indiancreek.org](http://www.indiancreek.org)) in Olathe, Kansas, he was fascinated by the church’s philosophy. “I had never experienced such an open, unassuming culture,” he says. “They were obviously interested in making a difference for God, and in making a difference for good. They really wanted to make the world better.

“GOD BLESSES THESE PERMISSION-GIVING, RISK-TAKING CHURCHES.”

—Dave Geenens

“What was so different, though, was this partnership mentality. I had never heard of anything like it.”

As president of AVP Nationwide Hospitality

Services, a provider of hospitality-based services for the healthcare industry, and founder of Inhance Leadership, a premier executive consulting and leadership coaching company, Dave understood the need for collaboration and partnership, but “I had never seen that in action in a church, not like this. It was born of being open to meeting the needs of the people in our community.”

Indian Creek had experienced an unusual commingling of ministry within its walls. “I was pastoring a small church plant, Trinity Fellowship, that was struggling,” says Tom Bassford, director of Significant Matters. “There was no strife, our team was just worn out, and I knew if we lost one more person, we were finished. I knew of the work happening at Indian Creek, and I felt led to talk to its senior pastor, Gary Kendall. I began to wonder if a small church of a different denomination could come in, join the fellowship, rest, rebuild, and then replant.”

Tom, minister of the Free Methodist congregation, approached Gary about merging with his Church of God (Anderson, IN) church, and within four months, it was done. On the surface, they appeared as one church, but behind the scenes, there will still be two different operations. “We had some common ministry, but it gave our leaders a place to rest and get plugged in,” says Tom. “They were so kind to us, never asking for a dime.”

All along, Tom’s plan was to re-launch Trinity Fellowship, but during his days at Indian Creek, he began to see how God was moving in this church that had such a strong external focus. “After some creative discussions, we determined that even more work could be done if we had a better-established system,” says Tom. “Gary continued to lead the church, Trinity Fellowship closed its doors, and I assumed leadership of the external ministries.”

“I was at that time wrestling with my own Halftime. I had been working with people in Halftime and loved connecting people to their purpose. Then I started to wonder if I could start a Halftime for the city. That’s how Significant Matters began.”



TOM BASSFORD

Significant Matters is a not-for-profit ministry that exists to create collaborative projects and partnerships between ministries and people with resources and those who are in need. “The church is the ‘docking enterprise’ for Significant Matters,” Dave says. “We share resources but not burdens. We also knew that by pulling it out from under Indian Creek, many churches, and even companies, could get involved in our projects.”

One of the first ministries that came out of Significant Matters was Share the Blessing, a warehouse of home furnishings, clothes and food for people in need. “Someone in the community had the idea,” says Gary. “She wanted to gather any extra home furnishings that people had and deliver them to people in need. The operation was running out of her garage, and she was running out of space. So we rented storage space, filled it, rented another, then filled that, and finally, we got a warehouse. We deliver the furniture and we stock food and clothing that people can come get. The amazing thing was, the woman who had this idea didn’t attend Indian Creek, but she came to us because she knew of our reputation.”



As part of Indian Creek’s Share the Blessing, volunteers deliver furniture to the homes of families in need.

“Significant Matters gives us teeth in the community,” Tom said. “We are a Biblically functioning community that lives out the love of Jesus Christ as the most powerful instrument of change. And if we don’t operate as an instrument of change, then we’ve failed.”

“This church is also an incredible steward of risk and a great example of the parable of the talents. Gary isn’t reckless, but he is a risk taker. Taking me on board was a huge risk—I could have split

the church in two. Instead, he took a chance that a change could mean greater ministry, and that happened.”

Sean Clouse is president of The IQ Group, a web-based business that helps companies create a suite of web-based products designed to streamline business processes, minimize overhead and improve customer satisfaction. Clouse is leading the efforts toward creating Dream Worx, “which will provide the platform and the resources for all of the ministries,” he says. “Regardless of what they do, every ministry needs some of the same basic business functions, like accounting, and Dream Worx will provide the infrastructure so that every one of them can be easily managed.”

“I was drawn to Indian Creek because of the senior pastor’s willingness to employ marketplace leaders in leadership positions,” Sean says. “Half of the senior management came from the marketplace, so they appreciate what business people bring to the table.”

Senior management of the church continues to look for ministry opportunities outside of the church. Gary co-founded a church consulting business, Church Multiplication Association ([www.churchmultiplicationassociation.com](http://www.churchmultiplicationassociation.com)), which seeks to find locations for and plant like-minded churches, recruit, train and coach high-capacity leaders as church planters, and to empower those planters to use the best available resources to accomplish their goals. “Indian Creek gave life to it, got it started, supported it, then set it free,” Gary says. “In only a year we’ve reached out to 38 churches.”

“The key to all of this is humility,” Dave says. “People from other churches are shocked at how quickly we can move on an idea. That’s because we all understand it’s all about something bigger than ourselves. That, and we’ve been given permission to create these partnerships.”

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## External Opportunities Model

Five years ago, the senior pastor of **Pantano Christian Church** ([www.pantanochristian.org](http://www.pantanochristian.org)) in Tucson, AZ, challenged his congregation to write down on a sticky note one way they could make a difference in their community. The notes were then posted together on a window for everyone to review. Not knowing exactly how to articulate what he was thinking, local mining company executive Dave White scribbled, “servant evangelism.” That was the best way he knew to describe what was on his heart.



DAVE WHITE

God was at work in that simple statement, as the next year, a collective spirit stirred in the congregation and ended in a project they dubbed, “Serve Tucson.” By then, Dave had been hired as the outreach pastor. He set a goal of getting five of the church’s small groups, called Life Groups, involved in a service project. “The response was overwhelming,” he says. “I had hoped for 50 people, and I got 500.” All of the group leaders said, “We want to do it, we want to own it, and we want the whole church to take part”.

A date was selected for Serve Tucson, and for a 2-hour period, 500 people descended on the city, giving free car washes, handing out bottled water at busy intersections, taking coins to Laundromats in low-income areas and paying for people’s laundry, and offering many other similarly simple but effective services. At the conclusion, a dinner was held so they could share stories of the day.

“The concept was that every day people could go out and do an act of service and make an impact for the kingdom. Maybe this event could stimulate a mindset of simple servanthood that at least some people could embrace on a daily basis,” Dave says.

“We also told the groups, if people ask, ‘Why are you doing this,’ follow these two guidelines: Simply say, ‘It’s our way of saying God loves you –no strings attached.’ Then shut up—because you never want to underestimate the value of saying too little,” Dave White says.

Since that first event five years ago, every spring, more than 700 people turn out for Serve Tucson. With that level of involvement, it had the

potential of becoming a logistical nightmare. So the Serve Tucson team decided to organize each location so that it became an opportunity for a Life Group to take complete ownership of the event at that location. By keeping the event short and simple, the Life Groups are able to self organize and problem solve their location.

Dave Piper, who is now director of Halftime Ministries, says, “It was a seismic testing opportunity for people who had never done anything, and for the old timers, who had determined they were through with evangelism—they now found themselves back into evangelism. It was so easy and so fun, and it got everyone involved.”



DAVE PIPER

The Life Groups are the genesis of most of the church’s ministry. Ninety-five percent of the groups have lay leadership. To get people plugged into these groups, the church produced the Pathway Handbook, which catalogues each group’s activity so others can connect and join in. From camping and motorcycling groups to those organized around cooking or being parents, the groups tap into people’s passions and provide a means for reaching those with similar interests. In addition to their activity, every group is encouraged to adopt a local or international mission project.

More than 13 years ago, one of these groups began taking an annual trip to Porta Penasco, Mexico, to do service projects. “In 1998, a new dynamic came about,” Dave Piper says. “The trip had been a men-only excursion, but the men decided that they wanted their families to have the experience. Because it was only a four-hour drive from Tucson, it was a low financial commitment for families, and though it was fairly low risk, it would give families the chance to work together to be the hands and feet of Jesus.”

Last year, 425 people built 12 homes for families who had been living without windows, doors or roofs. At the end, the new homeowners got a Bible signed by their building crew. “People walk away from this experience changed forever,” says Dave Piper. “It’s just as important for our body as for the people in Mexico. A high percentage of marketplace leaders got engaged with God on that trip, and it’s been a huge springboard for leadership.”



An orthopedic surgeon who went on one of the trips thought he had no margin to offer, other than that time of service. “He told us, ‘I have no time, but God wants me to do something,’” Dave Piper says. “While on the trip, the surgeon connected with a Mexican doctor and in conversation asked what he needed. The doctor boldly said, ‘We

“There is quicker response when someone is tapping into demand rather than us declaring where we want to go.”

The church also employs unconventional means for reaching out to nonbelievers. Dave Hout, a local school administrator who works with small groups, recently helped organize RiverTree Riders, a 200-person poker run (a motorcycle event where riders travel over a prescribed course, stopping at various points along the way) that ended at the church. The answer to the last question in the run was in a short sermon, and every person stayed to the end.

“Our service does not come out of a cry for need, but it’s really a study of how transforming happens,” says lay leader Larry Ray. “Looking outside of ourselves and service are part of our DNA. Our pastors have challenged us, said it’s time to step out of our comfort zone, and we’ve all gone willingly.”



A building team in Porta Penasco, Mexico.

want an urgent care clinic in this neighborhood where we can treat people. We can staff it, but we need the building, the furnishings, supplies and medicines.’ Working together, they got the land donated by the city, and the equipment and all supplies donated from the United States. In June, one of the Mexico Life Groups helped lay tile. A 501(c)3 organization formed because of the effort, and Clinics Without Borders secured donations from places other than just the church. All because of a doctor who realized he had something to give.”

“We have an entrepreneurial spirit in our church,” says Dave Piper, “and the ideas that come forward are always amazing.”

A similar spirit pervades the work at **RiverTree Christian Church** ([www.rivertreechristian.com](http://www.rivertreechristian.com)) in Massillon, OH. “Reaching out past our walls to those that are marginalized is part of our DNA,” says Cliff Price, minister of pastoral care.

RiverTree is in the beginning stages of getting deliberate about identifying marketplace leaders who can lead ministry in the city. “What we’ve discovered is that we have pent-up demand in our church,” Cliff says. “We have a number of people doing Halftime, but they didn’t know it, and they are using their margin. Outreach is happening in so many places, from a children’s home in the Ukraine, to a local pregnancy support center and the Born in Our Hearts adoption program.

“One of the things we have noted about our congregation is that they give an immediate response to an immediate need,” says Cliff.



Participants of the RiverTree Riders had to pose for photos as part of a scavenger hunt.

## Internal Development Model

Many churches have recognized that marketplace leaders have taken their place in the pew on Sunday morning, and it’s incumbent on the church leadership to shine a light on how they can help create transforming ministry.

**Fellowship Bible Church Nashville** ([www.fellowshippnashville.org](http://www.fellowshippnashville.org)) recently held a Halftime Summit in hopes of helping inspire some marketplace leaders to pursue their passions. “We had 160 people show up, and nine of them came forward with wonderful ideas but saying, ‘I get it, I want to do it, but I need help figuring out how,’” says Nashville businessman Dick Gygi, who is mobilizing Halftime ministries at the church.

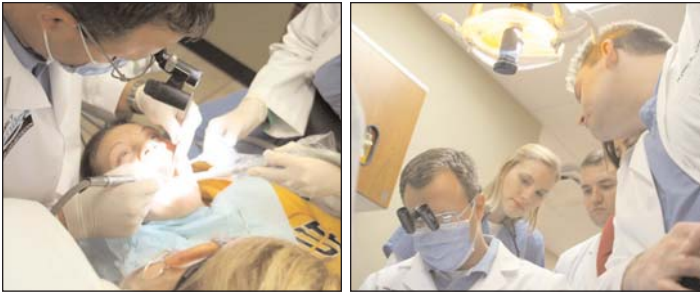


DICK GYGI

One of those people was Philip Kemp. “He wanted to mentor and disciple young dentists for Christ, and to teach them to serve the community with what they know how to do. He had been

sitting on this idea for five years,” says Dick. “His passion for this was greater than his passion for his practice, which was highly successful.

“So we gathered a Dream Team, and our challenge was to help him go deeper with the idea. He needed structure and a business plan. They came up with Project Smiles.”



Students from the dental school receive hands on training while helping people who may not otherwise receive dental care.

Philip took the idea to the dental school at the University of Tennessee, and it was well-received by the dean. One Friday a month, the dental school sends to Philip’s clinic eight to 10 dental students. There, alongside Dr. Kemp, they care for 20 to 30 women from the local women’s shelter. Project Smiles is running full steam, but “Philip has an even bigger vision that we are helping him to pursue,” Dick says. “He wants to have a residency program that will place dentists in clinics around the country to continue Project Smiles. I believe one day there will be the Kemp Institute for Dentistry that will make this happen.”

“Philip is a great example of what we’re supposed to be doing,” says Bill Wellons, pastor of development and community. “Our job is to look for leaders, determine if they have margin and influence, help them pursue their passions, and then look for ways to blow wind in their sails.”

Bill’s thought describes perfectly the efforts happening at **Christ Chapel Bible Church** ([www.christchapelbc.org](http://www.christchapelbc.org)) in Fort Worth, TX. The church held its first-ever Leadership Summit in May 2006. Of the 52 marketplace leaders in attendance, 19 stepped forward and asked to be part of the upcoming Success to Significance class.

“I can see that God has brought us leaders,” says Senior Pastor Ted Kitchens, “and honestly, I haven’t necessarily known how to lead them. I’m realizing now that they need encouragement more than they need leadership. Our people step in when there is a challenge and where there is vision.

“And they step up when we give them permission to do the work,” Ted says. “Being permission-giving is a stated core value for our church. That seems to me to be the only way to get things done. I recently gave a sermon about it, and really put it out there that giving permission was at the root of our being. Afterward, a church member excitedly shared with me his vision for starting an animal ministry at the local Alzheimer’s care center. I am not an animal lover, so it was hard for me to understand this idea. I hoped my face wasn’t saying what was running through my head, which was, “That’s the dumbest thing I’ve ever heard.” Quickly, I could almost hear God laughing, saying, “OK, big boy, you put it out there, let’s see what you’re made of.” So I responded, ‘What do you need from us?’ and he said, ‘Nothing, pastor! I don’t need anything. I just want you to tell me it’s a good idea and you’re for it.’ Half-heartedly I repeated his words, ‘It’s a good idea and I’m for it!’

“Months later, he has dozens of people visiting this center every week with their animals, and I am amazed at what’s happened in the lives of the people involved. It was a great lesson in allowing God to provide the vision and doing my part in truly giving permission for it to happen. That’s all the man needed from me.”



Much like Christ Chapel, **First Presbyterian Church of Fort Lauderdale**, FL, ([www.firstpres.cc](http://www.firstpres.cc)) is a church filled with marketplace leaders. “We have many prominent businessmen and women who are already doing work through their own philanthropy,” says Stuart Dugan, associate pastor for congregational care. “Because their lives are so public, many tend to keep their faith very private. My job is to help them understand that because of the skills, opportunities and rela-

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—Stuart Dugan

tionships they have through their work, they have a ministry opportunity I could never have.

Local real estate agent Phil Keagy has begun testing some of the ideas Stuart has put forth. Last year, he heard that the lunch program at a Christian summer camp in one of the local housing projects had been cut for costs. Enlisting the help of some people from the church, Phil decided to buy and prepare the food for the kids. When the kids heard lunch was

being provided the attendance grew. “The camp was being charged \$400 a week by a catering company for 30 kids” Stuart said, “and we overfed 54 of them for \$250 a week.”

Phil, and others, have continued their interaction with this community by organizing fishing trips and visits to the IMAX theater and the museum of science and industry. His efforts are becoming infectious. “When people see someone like Phil doing these kinds of things (and live to tell about it!) they say, ‘I want to do that too.’ And then they also get involved,” says Stuart.

The church is also helping provide the path toward how people think about their capacity to serve. In another new twist on the idea of Halftime, they are developing a program which targets successful young business people who are in their 30s, and giving them mentors. “We want to show them the right path now,” says Stuart. “By pairing them with older Halftimers, we provide them with wisdom that doesn’t come from youth or Forbes magazine. Some of that impact will be years in the future, but we know that it’s vital.”

While many marketplace leaders are coming to First Presbyterian, the church is also going to those influencers. “We see ourselves at the church for the community,” Stuart says. “We’ve helped blur the lines between the community and

the church. We’ve hosted civic funerals and several memorial services for both American and United airlines following the 9/11 tragedy which impacted many people here. We make ourselves accessible to our city’s leadership, giving us a chance to put the Lord in front of some of the most influential people in the marketplace.”

### **Wisdom About the Models**

As church leaders discuss their approach to identifying, developing and deploying marketplace leaders, they rarely limit themselves to a single model. “Most churches identify with more than one model,” says Wayne Smith. “There is no right or wrong answer in this search. The models are a tool for identifying strengths and describing modes of operation.

“Tom McGehee, president of WildWorks, reminds us that while no model is perfect, some are useful,” Wayne says. “That’s an important truth for everyone in this process to grasp. We’ve also seen that a church will follow different models at different times in its existence, and it will move in and out of some models as it develops. We know, too, that the hardest model to change is the one that works, but sometimes, for the sake of progress, you have to embrace a new way of thinking and of working. We recognize too that there are probably new models yet to be discovered.”

Churches are utilizing the four models to engage and encourage the development of new ministry via the talents, passions and influence of marketplace leaders. In doing so, communities across the country are reaping the benefits of creative, significant ministry, while the marketplace leaders are learning to engage their resources for the sake of Christ. “Underneath the fabric of American Christianity are people who are crying out for a personal, hands-on experience for being difference makers, not serving difference makers,” says Fellowship Bible Church’s Robert Lewis. “They come to the church

**PEOPLE ARE CRYING OUT FOR A PERSONAL, HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE FOR BEING DIFFERENCE MAKERS, NOT SERVING DIFFERENCE MAKERS.**

to be cared for and challenged, but there needs to be a point of ultimate destination—a hands-on ministry of their own. Helping them find this opportunity should be our greatest passion.”

### Following the Marketplace Leader

When Ted Kitchens, senior pastor of **Christ Chapel Bible Church** ([www.christchapelbc.org](http://www.christchapelbc.org)), Fort Worth, TX, talks about his church’s efforts to determine, develop and deploy marketplace leaders, he goes back to one simple thought: It was Pete’s idea.

The man to whom Kitchens refers is Pete Chambers, a member of the church who took the lead in involving Christ Chapel in Leadership Network’s Marketplace Success/Kingdom Significance Leadership Community. Pete is president & CEO of Diamond H Recognition, one of the country’s leading providers of full-service, corporate recognition programs, and he has a burning passion to help marketplace leaders learn how they can utilize their business success and skills to further God’s kingdom.

“I was introduced to Leadership Network in the late 1980s,” Pete says. “I heard from a friend in Young Presidents’ Organization about this guy named Bob Buford who was talking about taking men on a journey from success to significance. For whatever reason, I just had to talk to this guy. I tracked him down, stalked him really, and managed to get him on the phone. I shared with him my desire to achieve more than just business success or material wealth, but I had no idea what that really looked like or what that really entailed.”

The conversations between Bob and Pete continued sporadically over the next few years, and as Pete developed his business, he tracked with the growth of Leadership Network as well. “I was well-versed in business,” Pete says. “My dad took me to meetings from the time I was a young boy, so I knew how things operated in a board room. Suddenly, though, I realized how much I had, and I was so afraid of disappointing God with all that he had given me.”

Providentially, Pete joined a local Bible study led by Tom Wilson, president and CEO of Leadership Network. “I talked with him about the organization, and how their mission applied to my church and to what I believed was my calling,” Pete says. “I mentioned to him that I wanted to learn from the mistakes and successes other churches had made, instead of just embarking on my vision alone.”

Pete’s interest was definitely piqued by the goals outlined by the Marketplace Success/Kingdom Significance Leadership Community, but he was certain of one thing: “Ted, my pastor, had to be on board, or it wouldn’t work,” he says. “I told him about my many past conversations with Bob, but I think he needed more information before he was sold on the idea.”

The two soon attended a video conference of Willow Creek Leadership Summit. During one of the presentations, Bill Hybels, senior pastor of Willow Creek Community Church, mentioned Bob Buford, “and then I knew I had Ted’s attention,” Pete says.

With Ted’s endorsement, Pete presented to Christ Chapel’s lead elders and staff members the concept of joining this Leadership Community. He decided to remove any possible barriers to the concept by personally assuming all costs associated with the venture. “We have a large population of people with great margin, and I knew it was worthy of focusing inside our walls to find new roads of ministry. I was confident that Ted would receive it well. He did, along with the rest of the team.”



After five months of planning, they hosted their first Leadership Summit in May. “Four weeks before, we only had one RSVP,” Pete says. “I was beyond nervous. We took a risk having it during the workday, but we wanted to make sure that the guys who came were willing to make some sacrifice.”

Pete’s nerves eased when 52 men showed up, and his spirit was buoyed when 19 of them signed up for the small group studies. “Our goal is that in the next six months, we will have completed two small group classes, and in 18 months, we want to have 10 men and women who are fired up, passionate and ready to make an impact, whether in the marketplace or the church setting” he says. “We have many high-impact guys, and we are trying to shed light on the fact that all their great resources might be for another reason.”

Pete had another motive in mind when partnering with Ted. “I wanted his accountability and wisdom in this process,” he says, “but I also wanted him to see that our church, that *he*, is in hyper-growth, and by working with these people who were also in hyper-growth, they would find many things in common. I anticipated that he would be encouraged by what happened.

“I’ve also realized that I don’t have a lot of margin, in terms of time, so I’ve had to define my role well,” he says. “I was scared to say that, but I’ve learned not to be afraid to say no and to do what I believe God has called me to.

“We don’t want to get out in front of God, or ourselves, for that matter” he says. “Our ministry will be illuminating, educational, and permission-giving. We’ll create alliances with other ministries and have available a network of solutions. I also think we are going to teach people the joy of being intentional with God’s blessings.”



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Leadership Network welcomes your response. The primary writer is **Alexis Wilson**. Editorial advisors were **Wayne Smith**, Director of Marketplace Success/Kingdom Significance Leadership Communities; **Warren Bird**, Director of Research and Intellectual Capital Support for Leadership Network; and **Dave Travis**, Executive Vice President for Leadership Network. Contact them via [Diana.Jones@leadnet.org](mailto:Diana.Jones@leadnet.org)

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