

Quiet Intercession

By Stephanie Justen



But be sure to fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you. (1 Samuel 12:24)

I am the admissions director for a private school in Falls Church, Virginia. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, my school's campus was ordered to close in mid-March for the remainder of the academic year. Faculty, administrators, and students switched quickly to working exclusively from home. Teachers and staff went into overdrive to set up distance learning.

They were working extra-long hours, but in contrast, I was not very busy. In fact, my work had almost come to a standstill. I enjoy a hectic work pace and feel validated, important,

and even "essential." Without the work, I felt a little adrift.

A large part of my job is to forge relationships in the community and to reach out and introduce families to our school. With the campus closed and the country facing a concerning pandemic, most people weren't shopping for a new school. In fact, most parents were trying to survive in the moment—juggling their own jobs and overseeing kids at home.

I connected with other professionals and I watched a number of webinars about how to do my job differently in this changed environment. I wanted to be that innovative, creative, busy person, moving things forward, but what I could offer at this time was

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INSIDE: REFLECTIONS

The Holy Spirit at Work

"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

Jesus was talking in what must have seemed a foreign language to Nicodemus. All would become clearer after the death, resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of Jesus at the Father's right hand. Then, on Pentecost, the Holy Spirit would be poured out on the disciples and they would experience it all first hand.

This month's reflection writers tell their personal accounts of the Holy Spirit working in ordinary, but meaningful ways; ways they hadn't anticipated, with outcomes that surprised them.



God responds to what is happening around us. Our call is to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, following his lead even when we don't completely understand what he's up to.

John's Gospel promises if we do, our Father will give the Spirit without limit. (John 3:34)

June Reflections: Pg 2-4

REFLECTIONS WEEK 1

Saved by Rejection

By Hana Shin

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11)

During pharmacy school in Minnesota, I had an internship with a company called Health Partners. They were a great company to work for as a community pharmacist. They provided learning opportunities, a collaborative team of doctors, nurses, and pharmacists, and a good work/life balance. I was determined to work there after I graduated.

As a Canadian and an immigrant to the United States, it was imperative that I find work right after graduation. I only had a month to find work or else I would be required to leave the country. Not only was there a tight timeline but I also had to find a company willing to deal with my immigration paperwork. I talked to a lot of people at Health Partners, I made many con-

nections, and I worked as many shifts as I could. I did all the right things.

A month after graduation and earning my pharmacist license, I applied to work at Health Partners. My applications were submitted as quickly as possible, my interviews went extraordinarily well, and based on my coworkers' feedback, it felt very promising. I was devastated when I didn't get a position.

My plans had not come to fruition and worse, I realized that I would have to move away from Minnesota. For four years I had worked on developing friendships and building a community there. I couldn't understand why the Lord wouldn't honor my request.

I prayed for the Lord's help and the Holy Spirit motivated me to expand my job search. My resume got passed through several people until it reached my current boss and I was hired as a community pharmacist in Virginia. I was reluctant to move but I trusted in the Lord and his plans for me. I relocated to Virginia and found many blessings there. I reconnected with my Korean culture and with old friends in the area. Two months after moving, I found out that all Health Partners pharmacies were closing by the end of 2020.

It was an absolute shock. If I had gotten a position there, I would have been forced to find another position by the end of the year. It would have been nearly impossible to find an employer willing to sponsor my immigration paperwork within that time and I would have had to leave the country. However, the Lord is faithful and good and he provided a plan.

Hana Shin is a Toronto native currently practicing as a community pharmacist in an independent pharmacy in Annandale, VA. She can be reached at onehanashin@gmail.com.

PRAY

Lord, continue to guide me into your plans and will so I may build your kingdom.

REFLECT

Think of a time when your plans didn't come to fruition but everything ended well.

DISCUSS

Share a moment when God has provided.

GIVING
TUESDAY



NOW

THANK YOU

Thank you for your generous gifts and support during #GivingTuesdayNow. With your continued support we are able to help build God's Kingdom in new ways even in an unusual, changing workplace.



REFLECTIONS WEEK 2

Learning Through Grace

By Peter Staffelbach

“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.” (Ezekiel 36:26)

Much of what I knew about God and selflessness was easy to forget on a gray cold morning in northern Indiana. In late 2018, the tutoring business I had started a couple years before was limping along. This provided an opportunity to regularly attend my challenge group. After one meeting, James mentioned that he had never been a strong reader and that he'd like to read confidently to his young children. I offered to teach him some basics for a couple hours a week, and he was very open to it.

Later that week another member asked me about my plan for James and I told him. He replied “No, you need the business, and James needs the full program. I'll find the money if you both can commit to this.” I was astounded. The full program is 100 hours and costs about \$6,000.

I talked with James, and he was excited, nervous, but most importantly committed. For three hours a day, five days a week for the next 100 hours James worked with my business partner and me. The changes were amazing.

The Holy Spirit moved through our group at the perfect time. A series of selfless actions spurred by the Holy Spirit provided my business with consistent work. And James was given an opportunity he never imagined would be possible.

Peter Staffelbach is a young professional and a small business

owner who lives and works in South Bend, IN. He can be reached at peter.d.staffelbach@gmail.com.

PRAY

Lord, please keep my mind and heart open to your will. Let selflessness and courage guide even my smallest actions.

REFLECT

Consider a time in your work life when the problems outweighed the joy, but out of that you were given an opportunity to act selflessly in the Holy Spirit. Have you provided others with an opportunity to use their talents?

DISCUSS

When times are hard, do you look for opportunities to serve? Or do you only act when you are “in a good place”?

REFLECTIONS WEEK 3

The Right Opening

By Hana Shin

Just as the body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:12)

Prescription pill bottles are required to have safety caps to make it difficult for children to easily access medication. However, safety caps can be difficult to open by the elderly so there is an option to get easy open caps.

One busy day at the pharmacy, we received a call from a 98-year-old woman informing us that we had accidentally given all her

medications safety caps. Her caretaker was unavailable and the patient was unable to get to the pharmacy. She had no access to her important medications.

Even with safety steps in place this error had slipped through on my day off. My initial thought was “not my mistake, not my problem” but as the pharmacy worked to resolve the issue, it became clear that it would be easiest if I drove to the patient's house and changed all the caps after work. I was reluctant to volunteer because it would be an inconvenience. Then a little voice told me that to volunteer would be for the greater good. It's amazing how accurate the Holy Spirit can be. So, I drove to the patient's house after work and fixed the problem.

The next day, it was clear how much my coworkers appreciated my help.

More importantly, it helped create an environment for us to help one another. The Holy Spirit helped me realize that I can be united with my coworkers and in doing so, become united with our customers and the community. The Holy Spirit brings unity and melts away division.

PRAY

Lord, pour your Holy Spirit into me so that I may bring unity at work.

REFLECT

How can you be a team player in your work environment?

DISCUSS

Share a time you made a sacrifice for the greater good of a group.

REFLECTIONS WEEK 4

One Day at a Time

By Robert Baylon

But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today"... (Hebrews 3:13)

Like thousands of small business owners, John Allen had been forced to close his dental practice after the COVID-19 outbreak. He knew he wouldn't be able to pay the business mortgage that month. He would have to call the lending bank and see whether they were willing to work something out.

He spoke with Mavis, a seasoned call center employee. She told him right off the bat, "We are here to take care of you first and foremost. That's what we are here for and that is what we

are going to do." Clearly a woman of faith, Mavis continued to encourage Dr. Allen throughout the call, saying, "We stand together in faith and profess that this virus will pass, and until then we are going to take care of one another because we are in this together."

When she told him that he would have no payment due that month and would incur no fees, there was a long pause. When Dr. Allen answered, his voice was choked with emotion. "That's amazing... I don't know how to thank you guys... I can't tell you what this means." He explained that he had foregone his own paycheck that month in order to pay his handful of employees. "I told you," Mavis said softly, "We are here to take care of you. That's our job. We are going to get through this thing together, one day at a time."

Robert P. Baylon lives in Virginia and works for the lending bank

described. The day after this phone call, his company sent the transcript to its employees as an example of true customer service.

PRAY

Lord, please bless me with words of hope whenever I encounter someone who is fearful or discouraged.

REFLECT

What opportunities do I have to encourage people who are battling fear?

DISCUSS

How can we reach out to people who need encouragement when we cannot be together physically?

spark

Whatever you do,
do it all for the glory of God.

WORKLIGHT

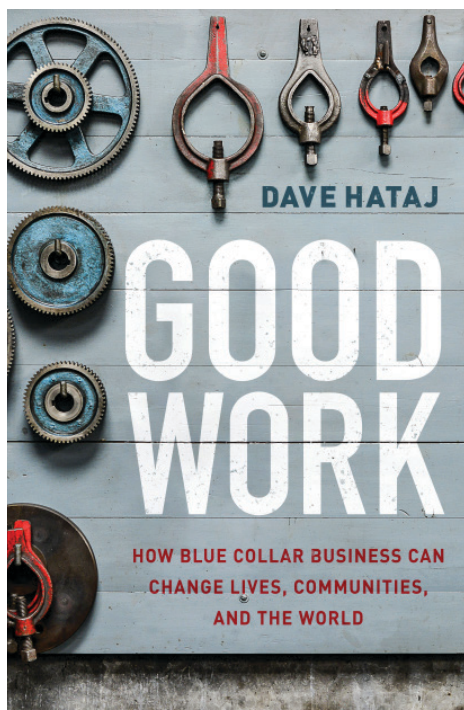
On May 11, Workday Reflections was renamed Spark and given a fresh look. Spark will continue to bring personal stories and links to other resources straight to your inbox.

Go to cicintl.org/wdr to find out more.



Anatomy of a Failure

By Dave Hataj



Every person in the history of the world can tell stories about their failures. In business, we perhaps have more opportunities for failure than most people because we're risk takers. One of my biggest failures started 15 years ago, and I'm still paying for it. Or, put another way, I'm still reaping the benefits of the lessons.

It all started when an engineer friend of mine started the conversation with, "Don't say no! Just hear me out." That should have been my first clue to kick his butt out the door.

He had redesigned an old machine with new technology and was convinced there was a huge need for it, and he needed a machine shop to build it. My initial instincts were to decline his offer, as we were a gear shop and this wasn't a gear. However, agreeing to think about it, I sought the counsel of my staff and everyone agreed

it sounded like a great opportunity. I seriously prayed about it for several days, but there were no obvious reasons not to say yes.

However, something didn't feel right. I had this nagging sense that I was walking into a storm—and that I was supposed to. So, against my better judgment, I agreed. And thus, we started a ride into the abyss that we wouldn't get out of for over a decade.

Before I knew what hit us, we were \$300,000 in the hole with no strong sales prospects.

Things then went from bad to worse. One of the engineers had spent some time in our shop and had downloaded pirated software onto one of our computers. Suddenly, I was getting legal notices that stated we were in violation of licensing laws and we either had to pay tens of thousands of dollars in fines or be sued.

The entire venture was, by far, the worst business decision I had ever made. Bankruptcy was considered, but only as a last resort. I was always taught to do whatever it takes to keep your word and pay your bills. Besides, my parents had spent a lifetime building a reputation of being trustworthy, responsible, and frugal, and I had no intention of screwing that up.

So, we buckled down and turned one of our machinists into a part-time salesman. We continued to advertise online, and slowly the inquiries came in. As we'd done at Edgerton Gear, we approached every potential client as another opportunity to serve someone rather than as just another potential sale. Within a year, we'd sold a few machines. Within five years, we sold a few more. A full 14 years later, we finally broke even and made a little profit. In the short-term, we failed miserably. In the long-term, the business has been far from a success, unless you define success as breaking even after 15 years!

David Hataj is president and co-owner of Edgerton Gear, Inc. This is adapted from his new book Good Work, How Blue Collar Business Can Change Lives, Communities, And the World.

Continued from page 1

minimal. My particular contribution to the organization was not in immediate demand.

In my daily prayer time I asked the Lord for clarity on what I should do. I felt I heard him say, "Don't seek to be noticed. Don't seek attention or the respect of men. Instead, become small, humble, like my Son. You work for me." I thought the Lord was also calling me to specifically pray for the prospective families I work with.

As admissions director, I have a unique opportunity to get to know families as they apply. I often develop a casual friendship with them that extends over a few years. I know some personal details and concerns these parents have for their children. I know a little something about each family, and I also know the applicants themselves. It occurred to me that I was uniquely qualified to intercede for them during this concerning time.

I thought the Lord was also calling me to specifically pray for the prospective families I work with.

I have always prayed in a general way for families and students looking at our school. Now, my prayers have become much more focused and personal. My work at home will probably go unnoticed. It will not boost my image or make me more acceptable and pleasing to my coworkers, but I am convinced I am working with God in this small way to bring the grace of Christ to bear on these families.

Stephanie Justen is the admissions director for a private Christian school in Falls Church, VA. She and her husband Keith were married in 1994. They have four children. She may be reached at kjusten2@gmail.com.

The Spirit of Peace

By Aloysius Mugisa



I came to the United States in early March at the invitation of friends who helped to start a secondary school in a poor village in Uganda. I came to meet the people who supported the building of the school and to carry home some much-needed school supplies. I also planned to use this trip to visit CIC chapters and share my Uganda experience of CIC.

When I arrived COVID-19 was taking a toll on many states, thus canceling some of my planned events and travels. This was devastating given the distance I had traveled and the months of preparation. From deep within me, came a calming whisper. “The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it



comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” (John 3:8.) God assured me that he would blow me where he pleased at the appropriate time. I relaxed. I let go and let God be. “Not my way but your way, Lord,” I said to myself.

My return flight was also canceled and my country’s borders were closed. This was indeed devastating but God’s spirit took charge of my mind and comforted me. “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (John 14:27) I concentrated on thanking God for giving me a home away from home. I was not in a refugee or displaced people’s camp but somewhere I was loved and accepted.

I was able to visit and quarantine in a few locations and received wonderful hospitality. I accepted these homes as my new home, for as long as the Lord pleased. My hosts have lavished me with wonderful meals, conversations, and made efforts to make sure that I was warm, especially coming from Uganda.

I experienced the gift of technology to share God’s work in Uganda via Zoom. Everyone has been eager to talk with me and learn how God is using CIC in my country. The opportunity to have good conversations with CIC members in the US gives me encouragement and connectedness that I will take back home to Uganda. I also thank God for providing a number of necessary school supplies, from laptops to laboratory equipment, that will be helpful to our students. The Lord’s generosity, even in the midst of a pandemic, is amazing.

The daily increased cases of COVID-19, the quarantine, the lockdown, and

the fear I have witnessed since my arrival here, remind me of the vulnerability of humankind and the futility of man’s independence. When the world’s mighty science and technology cannot save it from the tiny COVID-19 viruses, God alone is the answer. I stand firm knowing the Lord will protect me. “Can anyone of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?” (Matthew 6:27)

One day I will pass on from this life and the cause of my death is always around me, perhaps even closer than COVID-19. The only difference is that COVID-19 is announced. I know the Lord brought me here for his mission and he wants me to return to Africa and continue serving him. Blessed be his holy name.

Aloysius Mugisa is the president of the Uganda Men’s Chapter and began working full time for CIC in 2019. His wife, Oliva, is a primary school teacher. They have four daughters. Aloysius can be reached at mugisaalloysius11@gmail.com.

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit,
That my thoughts may all be holy.
Act in me, O Holy Spirit,
That my work, too, may be holy.
Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit,
That I love but what is holy.
Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit,
To defend all that is holy.
Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit,
That I always may be holy.

Saint Augustine



NEWS

WORKLIGHT STORYNIGHT EVENTS IN PLACE OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Christians in Commerce will not be hosting an Annual Conference in 2020. We encourage chapters to consider convening brothers and sisters in Christ by hosting regional WorkLight StoryNight events. Our first ever WorkLight StoryNight was a huge success in Minnesota. You can read more about it in the April *Flame* newsletter [here](#).

We hope to see at least three StoryNight events around the country take place later this year. If you are interested in learning more, including virtual hosting options, please reach out to us at Remote@WorkLight.org.

WORKLIGHT REMOTE: A NEW WAY OF MEETING

To help minimize the spread of COVID-19, social distancing has become our new reality. We've all had to adjust to new routines, new work-life balances, and how we meet. Meeting with fellow Christians is encouraged by God and occurs throughout the Bible. It's natural that we look for ways to meet and in challenging times it can be even more important to connect with our CIC community.

To meet that need, Christians in Commerce and WorkLight created WorkLight Remote. Launched at the end of March, WorkLight Remote works to keep CIC members and community connected in Christ through technology, virtual small groups, access to on-demand resources, and online versions of our programs and events like Working for Our Father.

Since the cancellation of in-person meetings, many chapters, challenge groups, and members have begun

communicating with each other in new ways—through video/ phone conference calls, sending encouragement, email updates/ check-in.

CIC President Wesley Farrow (MN) understands the importance of personal connection. "I try to call at least one person each day just to check in and see how they are doing," he said. "Sometimes it's one of my best friends and other times it's someone I haven't spoken to in years. Just a simple way to stay in relationship and care with one another."

Jack McCall from the San Jose Chapter said that he has emailed, talked to, and Face-timed with a number of men in and out of his chapter to make sure they know that he's available for them. He thinks Zoom is a great solution too. He said, "Even though all of us are busy taking care of the consequences of COVID-19, we need to get out of ourselves and let the Lord use us."



The Fruit of Connection

- Meeting online through web conferences has made it possible for some members who were unable to attend past meetings to once again participate.
- Friends have reconnected after losing touch over the years.
- Some challenge groups have shared an inspiring daily devotional.

- Some groups have held conference calls with 20 or so people—including a leader and speaker—for a 30-40 minute meeting.
- Other groups use Skype where they can gather to sing, discuss the newsletter, and best of all, pray for our world in this crisis.

Series and other Events

Also through WorkLight Remote, we successfully held the first online Working for Our Father series, followed by two open remote small groups.

If your Chapter or group is interested in receiving more information or hosting a WorkLight Remote event or program (StoryNight or Working for Our Father), please reach out to Remote@WorkLight.org.

Remember to Unplug

Kathleen Shaffer noticed on a recent evening that her phone was not ringing, the TV and computer were off, and in the silence she could feel the peace of the Lord. It settled on her like the wings of a dove. Her typical evenings prior to COVID-19 were filled with phone conversations, text messages, emails, and all the details of her busy life at Informed Choices Pregnancy Care Center. It's important to thank the good Lord for this time to pause and feel his presence.

2020

JUNE

*"I have been crucified
with Christ and I no
longer live, but Christ
lives in me."*

Galatians 2:20

THE FLAME

CHRISTIANS IN COMMERCE PRAYER

Father,

You are my Lord and Creator.

You entrust me with a place of stewardship in your creation.

Fill me with your Holy Spirit:

That he may teach me to pray and live in Christ and as Christ;

That he may teach me love for family, friends and all people.

A love that is selfless, humble, and wise;

*That he may teach me stewardship of the talents, time, money and
possessions you have given me.*

A stewardship that serves, is generous, and brings honor to your name;

That he may teach me faithfulness to your call to Christians in Commerce.

A call that unites us and builds your Kingdom in the marketplace.

Through Jesus Christ who is Lord.

Amen

VISION Being Christ in the workplace

MISSION To encourage and equip Christians to be God's presence in the workplace by the power of the Holy Spirit, exercising faith, integrity, and excellence

VALUES Christians in Commerce is an ecumenical organization committed to:

- Growing and being transformed in Jesus Christ
- Manifesting the gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Building strong brotherhood and sisterhood
- Serving God and expanding his Kingdom in all aspects of our lives

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