

Choose Peace

By Desi Cataluña

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

As fall approaches, teachers return to their classrooms. This year I had a new assignment to teach at a Title 1 school. Prior to the start of the school year, I reached out to the school secretary and custodian to learn the necessary protocols and requested supplies for the upcoming semester.

In the last week leading to opening day, I finally received my supplies. I was so excited—it was like Christmas Day! My classroom floor looked like a checkerboard, filled with square packets and boxes placed in patterns. A week before “materials distribution” day, I took inventory of my supplies and the unopened boxes. Things were falling into place and I was feeling prepared and at peace.

The next Monday, I checked on my classroom and the boxes and supplies

were gone! I walked around the classroom panicking and peeking into book shelves and cabinets. Then I stood paralyzed trying to keep myself together. Shortly after, the custodian walked in.

I asked him, “Cecilio, do you know what happened to my boxes that were here?” He looked at me and knew I was in a frightful mood. “I don’t know,” he said. “But I did see Mr. B. in here.” Confused, I said, “What? Mr. B. was in here, in my classroom?” The custodian watched me as I paced.

I was upset but I needed to compose myself. Inhaling slowly, I sat at my desk and closed my eyes. I crossed myself and began to pray for guidance and to maintain a spirit of peace while I hunted for my supplies. Rather than running to the administrator to report my loss, I chose to pray and to be led by the Holy Spirit on what to do next.

My prayers led me to Mr. B.’s room. I opened his classroom door slowly and saw every single one of my supplies: the notebooks, folders, pencils, composition books, scissors, and glue

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INSIDE: REFLECTIONS

Influencing Workplace Culture

In our own work, our Father calls us to align our careers with his mission to restore all things. In addition, he desires we draw others into the good labor of his vineyard. To give them the dignity of applying skills and growing in abilities.

Working in the Father’s vineyard is also a metaphor for our own role as Christian laborers. The work of agriculture takes what nature has to offer and makes something of it.



Our occupations are similar. Like Adam, we are put in God’s garden of creation. We are called to work the soil entrusted to our care, to get our hands dirty. We take the raw material God provides and draw potential out of them.

The biblical perspective of this is to be stewards of creation. As Christians, we are stewards of all that is entrusted to us.

For this reason, our occupations really matter. They are key to our stewardship for society and God’s creation.

May Reflections: Pg 2-4

REFLECTIONS WEEK 1

Standing for the Lord

By Christine Ziegler

Stand up and praise the Lord your God, who is from everlasting to everlasting. (Nehemiah 9:5)

Our company has always had daily morning prayer. As we transitioned to working from home during the pandemic, we also transitioned to Zoom prayer three times a week. We sang the same songs (muted due to timing lags), and followed the same basic format: praise, personal sharing, and intercession. But, like most things this past year, it was different. It was odd to see everybody seated at their computers praying.

As the months went by, our prayer time began to feel like a 10 o'clock meeting

rather than an opportunity to praise the Lord. Eventually, I mastered replying to emails during the singing, sharing, and praying. It seemed that more of us were multitasking right through prayer time.

In January, our company president proposed that we experiment with standing during our time of praise. So we tried it—monitors were raised, laptop lids were tilted back, and we stood. Suddenly I had room and freedom to pray in my workspace. As I looked at everyone on the screen, I realized almost all of us had our hands raised in praise. It was one of the most joyful prayer times we'd had together in months. We have stood to praise ever since. I now look forward to my "10 o'clock."

Over the months working from home, we seemed to grow weary of praising the Lord together. We needed someone to encourage us to "Stand up and praise the Lord your God..." It was a small change, but it has made a big difference.

Christine Ziegler is the president of the WCIC South Bend-Elkhart Chapter. She is the Director of Operations at the LaSalle Company Inc. She can be reached at clziegler@gmail.com.

PRAY

Lord, open my eyes to see where you are inviting me to stand up and give me the courage to change.

REFLECT

Are there areas in my life where I have grown weary? How can I stand up?

DISCUSS

What small change can you bring to your workplace to positively influence the culture?

Share your story: The Flame Newsletter

We are currently accepting story submissions for *The Flame* newsletter. Here are the upcoming monthly themes:

- Fruit of the Spirit
- Doing The Right Thing
- Overcoming Jealousy and Envy
- Humility at Work
- Serving Others

If you have a workplace story that fits with these themes and would like to share, please contact communications@worklight.org.

Not a writer?
That's okay, we can help!
Your story has power, we want to give your story a voice.

REFLECTIONS WEEK 2

Company-wide
Message

By David A. Mazanowski

“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)

Some time ago I started sending out weekly communications to my staff. I feel doing this is important for building a strong workplace culture and community of trust and relationships. It’s also a way for a large staff to get to know and trust me more on a personal level. Last week, I wrote a note recapping the last year—a year no one could have ever expected—and discussing the path forward and having hope.

The last 12 months have been a wild ride of emotions for me, and I expect just as

much so, if not more for my employees. In the note, I shared my perspective and acknowledgement of that, how the future of the company impacts every employee and how we’re in this together—as a team.

I included a quote from the English writer Lewis Carroll that said, “If you don’t know where you are going, any road will take you there.” For us that means the road ahead is clear and that no matter what—we know where we’re going.” I explained that we are brothers and sisters in Christ and should treat each other with respect. I’m idealistic, so to me it’s a difficult vision to achieve, but it’s worth approaching.

I believe if we continue down this path of relationship building and viewing our work as not just a job but as important work where we can all make a difference outwardly in each other’s lives, then the future will be bright for all of us and set us apart from the competition. We will be the best workers—coworkers in Christ.

David Mazanowski is a board member of WorkLight. He lives in Indianapolis with his wife Donna. He is the cofounder of Mainscape Inc., a commercial landscape maintenance firm and he can be reached at damazanowski@mainscape.com.

PRAY

Dear God, lead me to where I can make a difference in today’s workplace. Help me to always seek to be like you.

REFLECT

Do you view work as a gift?

DISCUSS

How and where is God calling you to lead?

REFLECTIONS WEEK 3

Building
Relationships

By Christine Ziegler

The nations will see your vindication, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will bestow. (Isaiah 62:2)

For the past 27 years, I have worked for a company that distributes religious education materials to churches and schools throughout the United States.

In 2016, we hired a new company president. He decided that we needed to change our sales approach. Instead of waiting for customers to call us, he envisioned us reaching out to them and building relationships with them. Most of our order takers had been with us for years. They found the idea of becoming “salespeople” a bit

daunting. There were a few tears and even some sentiments of, “Don’t make us do this.” But he was convinced this was a key to the future success of our business. He encouraged the department to come up with a new name that would capture their new job description.

They eventually decided on Religious Education Support Team (REST). The name change was significant for the department’s self-understanding. Although they did not see themselves as salespeople, they have always been passionate about supporting our customers’ religious education efforts. Now they strategize on how to get the best deals for their customers. They track answers to their customer’s questions and solve their problems. They bring their customer’s needs to our common prayer. They are building those relationships.

This self-understanding has permeated the company. The struggles REST experienced cracked things open

for all of us. Their mission has become ours. Marketing’s focus shifted from catalogs and emails to designing free resources and tools for our customers. IT continuously improved the order process. Even our collections calls have a new tone and message. Being “called by a new name” has given us all a new mission.

PRAY

Lord, help me to see how I fit in where I work. Help me to strengthen connections and move your work forward.

REFLECT

How do you respond to changes at work? What new name might the Lord be giving you in the midst of the change?

DISCUSS

What is the mission of your workplace? What can you do to support that mission?

REFLECTIONS WEEK 4

Having a Vision

By David A. Mazanowski

Where there is no revelation, people cast off restraint. (Proverbs 29)

My company, Mainscapes, has evolved and grown beyond anything I ever could have imagined and it's been a wild ride.

The company was born out of a Christian campus ministry while I attended Ball State University. Originally, its purpose was to provide employment for college students so they could have a positive impact on the college campus. Since then, it's transformed into a place that employees (of all ages and backgrounds) can think of as their

own, can control their own destiny, have a great family life, and make a positive impact on the world.

We operate with the intention of moving forward together. Our vision didn't happen overnight, but it's something we work on. It's now incorporated into every aspect of our work. It's in the planning, recruiting, and training, safety rodeos, financial reporting, customer service, sales presentations, and IT development. It looks like a business management system or process. At its core the vision tangibly builds the culture of the company. It keeps us pointed in the right direction.

It's not always easy to live and seek out the vision, I understand that we will make mistakes and we will face fears and doubts. But if the company continues to work as a team, we will prosper—and that's the kind

of workplace culture that I want for Mainscapes. Together through Christ we can be the best workers.

PRAY

Come Holy Spirit, help our vision be clear and guide us on the right path to seeking Jesus and seeking to be like Jesus, being the best workers in today's workplace.

REFLECT

God gives us the best tools to be the best workers. What gifts and talents has he placed in you?

DISCUSS

We can all work to influence workplace culture, no matter the role. In what ways have you considered or are you influencing a positive workplace culture?

WORKLIGHT™

REMOTE SMALL GROUPS



These groups are led by WorkLight staff, and are open to all who wish to attend.

WorkLight Remote Men's Group
Led by Wesley Farrow, WorkLight President
Tuesdays @ 12 pm Central

WorkLight Remote Women's Group
Led by Becki Lonquist, WorkLight Director of Communications
Thursdays @ 12 pm Central

For more information on Small Groups check out the group map online at bit.ly/WLgroups.

The Father's Gift of Work

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. (Genesis 2:15)

How do you look at your work? How satisfied are you with the good work you do and how do you think God responds to your work?

For we are what God has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared before to be our way of life. (Ephesians 2:10)

Work is essential to our human nature. It's in our DNA. We spend 60% of our waking hours working; 90,000 hours in an average lifetime. Good work is satisfying and brings about good results. It is our Father's great gift to us. God wishes us to accept the gift of work freely, like Adam in the garden.

Do we take that gift of being God's gardener to work with us?

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men...it is the Lord Christ you are serving. (Colossians 3:23-24)

God's creation was made for all to flourish. We work with our Father to enable all to both live and contribute to the work for which we are created.

Jesus told a parable about his Father as the compassionate employer. In Matthew 20, the employer hires workers throughout the day and pays them all equally according to his promise.

All are paid equally for their work, reflecting how the Father's justice is cloaked in mercy.

The Father knows the importance of work in his plan. He is eager for all to find dignity in being useful to one another and share the gratifying, satisfying experience of working together, solving problems, and being fruitful.

In our work, our Father invites us to align our careers with his mission to restore all things. He desires we draw others into the good labor of his vineyard. Like Adam, we are put in God's garden of creation. We are called to work the soil entrusted to our care, to get our hands dirty. We take the raw material God provides and draw out its potential, working shoulder to shoulder with others.

And, let people learn to devote themselves to good works in order to meet urgent needs, so that we may not be unproductive. (Titus 3:14)

Working for our Father is a call to be stewards of his creation. For this reason, our occupations really matter. Our Father is the compassionate employer calling us to join him in his good work. Our work enables us to live a life of dignity, to work with faith, integrity, and excellence. And, like him, to do it for the good of all, not solely for personal benefit. Life in Christ is a life of self-giving, not self-serving.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, these are the choices we're called daily to make. Our daily choices are the chisels that sculpt our character and will determine how well over time we reflect the image and character of Christ.

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men...it is the Lord Christ you are serving. (Colossians 3:23-24)

What a noble and valuable calling is good work!

Excerpted from the Working for Our Father video series Video 1. To find out more, go to <https://worklight.org/working-for-our-father/>

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Choose Peace

sticks. After moving everything back to my classroom, I emailed Mr. B. to let him know.

Soon after, a group chat message with my colleagues popped up on my phone. Mr. B. said that all of his supplies were gone. I chatted back, "Check your email." An hour later Mr. B. came to my classroom. As we discussed the situation I stood my ground and remained calm.



Mr. B.'s feelings were hurt but he realized how I must have felt when I discovered my supplies were gone. Fortunately, by end of the day he was smiling—the supplies he ordered back in May had finally arrived. Peace and joy were restored.

Now, our third-grade team meets weekly to discuss curricular goals. There's a sense of support amongst us and no one would ever guess that Mr. B. and I got off to a rough start. We have chosen peace in the workplace, and for that I am grateful.

Desi Cataluña lives in Gilroy, CA. A member of Gilroy Morgan Hill Chapter since 2007, Desi is a teacher at Oak Grove School District in San Jose. She periodically visits her sons, one in San Francisco and the other in Guam, along with her 7 grandchildren. She can be reached at dac0503@yahoo.com.

Surrendering

By Annie D. Stutley

Let us not grow weary of doing good, for at the proper season we will reap a harvest, if we do not give up. (Galatians 6:9)

I've had a lot of time to sit and wait lately. Waiting for biopsy results, waiting to be seen by a doctor, and waiting to muster the courage to say out loud, "I have cancer." I never knew how hard it is to say that. It feels dark, twisted, and alien—and when applied to yourself, it feels downright foreign. So often, I just say nothing.

I'm also waiting for healing, through a surgery that has the promise of being curative. I'm waiting to think about the future and really daydream with no "well, if this turns out the way I hope" strings attached.

I'm waiting to not just say that I trust God, but to really feel it from

the top of my head to the tips of my toes. And I'll be honest, some days I don't. I'm scared. I love my husband and my children and my family and friends so much. I feel like I have just now discovered the work God has called me to do. And I love doing that work in his name.

But isn't that what it means to surrender? To do everything we have the power to do (in my case, find the right doctors, eat well, exercise, and stay focused on him) and then give it all to God? And when we surrender, isn't it then that we truly understand the beauty and power of hope?



Sweet, honest, almighty hope with her belief that all shall be well in spite of dark, twisted, alien thoughts creeping in through the light. Hope isn't a wish. Hope is our fuel every morning. Hope remembers when we've been saved before and hope knows we will be saved again and again. The gift of those who sit in waiting, hope is the rock of our faith.

It seems that the hardest thing I have ever done is waiting on the courage to do what I am doing right now: to place all of it in God's merciful hands and say, "I trust you, Lord."

Annie Stutley is a freelance writer living in New Orleans with her husband, Bill, and their three children. She can be reached at anniedstutley.com.

PRESIDENT'S NOTE



"...nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is in your midst." (Luke 17:21)

Influencing Workplace Culture

During a recent WorkLight Remote Small Group meeting, Will DeSanto shared an inspiring story about how God used him to bring a man to Christ. At the end of a busy day, a colleague came to Will's office to talk about Jesus, and the conversation led to praying for the Holy Spirit in a nearby conference room. Hallelujah!

Let us be encouraged by stories like this. But even more so, let us be equipped to

be used by Jesus to influence culture in all ways that transform the workplace into God's Kingdom. Especially in ways that might seem small or unnoticeable, because those may be just the seeds that were meant to be planted.

Growth in the early church, as well as Christianity's cultural impact on the world, is often described as a patient fermentation. Why not a wildfire? Perhaps this is one of the many ways that God reminds us to live in the abiding fruit of the spirit, with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Between our Spark emails and this newsletter, we are working 24/7 to spread the fire of the Holy Spirit. But

in our burning desire to serve Jesus let us remain humble and diligent to our call to serve.

We hope you'll consider inviting the Holy Spirit into your life this month with a Monday morning prayer call, a Chapter meeting, or perhaps a Small Group. By burning brightly together, the light of Jesus can shine even further into the lives of our colleagues and families.

Let us praise God the Father when we see miracles, and let us all the more praise Jesus for the ways he shapes the workplace that are beyond our understanding. Glory!

With you in Christ,

Wes

NEWS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

With hearts of gratitude for his service, we say farewell to WorkLight Board Member **Art Klaum**, who recently turned in his letter of resignation. Art stepped down effectively on April 1. Art has been a member of Christians in Commerce, now WorkLight, since 1991 and has served on the Board for Christians in Commerce & WorkLight for over 18 years.

“While some of you may not be able to relate to this very well, it is amazing how fast these past 30 years have gone for me and my generous wife. I can recall the first Chapter meeting I went to in Mesa, AZ and hearing men pray spontaneously and in a conversational



way with our Lord. After attending my first Challenge Weekend, I can recall being asked to pray about serving on the Mesa Chapter’s Service Council. I will never forget sitting in the back row of St. Timothy’s Church, praying for God’s will in this, and having a physical sensation of his presence wrapping around me like a warm blanket. The Lord has used the Days of Reflection, Challenge Groups,

Annual Conferences, and various interactions with many of you to form me toward what he desires for me.”

– Art Klaum

Art has been both a symbol of what the organization stands for, and a friend and mentor to many. He will still continue to support WorkLight and continues serving the ministry, by providing continuous improvement training for staff.

“Serving on the Board of Directors for this great organization and ministry has been humbling and an honor. There are too many brothers and sisters to thank, and I would hate to miss someone. Know that you are always in my prayers and that we will continue, arm-in-arm, soldiering for Christ, bringing faith, integrity, and excellence into our

workplaces and where we conduct ‘commerce.’ May the Lord continue to bless us and WorkLight.”

– Art Klaum

If you would like to send a note or share a memory with Art, please consider emailing him at artklaum61@gmail.com.

Weekly Prayer Calls

Join by calling:
(313)-314-2699

Mondays at 10 a.m. ET

Start the workweek off in prayer with WorkLight! Let us continue to pray for blessings, moments of trouble, and challenge — all to draw us closer to our Father together.

Fridays at 11:30 a.m. ET

Join WorkLight staff in prayer for growth as we seek to reach further and continually build the kingdom of God in the workplace.

As John 21:25 reads, “Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.” Well done, good and faithful servant.

The Story of Christ at Work

Watch inspirational videos of Christians sharing their stories about living out their faith in the workplace and examples of what it means to them to be Christ at work.

Visit worklight.org/WorkLight-Stories

2021**MAY**

*"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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