10 New Names and 1 Idea!

In the eighties, church job titles were pretty simple. We even had decision cards that you could fill out if you felt "called" to "special service."

You might feel called to be a

_____ Pastor
_____ Music Minister
_____ Youth Minister
_____ Minister of Education
_____ Foreign Missionary

(Check one.)

That's it. Check the nature of your particular call to ministry and we'll tell you about the closest Christian College where you can go to get a testimony.

But sometime around '89 a trusted denominational leader went to a business conference and the wave of new ministry vocations began to trickle down to your typical Baptist Church. These names, I suppose, were to clarify the positions and to give people a better understanding of what they actually do.

1. Pastor of Spiritual Formation

Pastor of Spiritual Formation which is … well.. they kind of form… no… they shape the uh… spirituality of the deacon and leaders? I give up. I imagine he's like the Minister of Assimilation – whatever that is.

2. Magnification Pastor

Then there is the Magnification Pastor. (This is a real

position in several churches. Several big, successful churches, so I can't be critical. It's working.) Logic would tell me that the Magnification Pastor would be the Senior Adult minister. He'd do his weekly column in extra-large print. This title of Magnification Pastor is not for every minister. If the Pastor was a grumpy, stick-in-the-mud, youth-minister-firing, church-split-waiting-to- happen guy, would you really want to magnify him. In truth the magnification pastor is someone who preaches or leads worship on Sunday.

Some Sundays.

When he's not at Catalyst.

3. Executive Pastor

Executive Pastor is the Minister of Education. We call him Executive Pastor to get rid of the stigma that the Ministers of Education have carried for years- that he's the guy who gives the announcements and knows where the overhead projectors are stored.

4. Children's Pastor

The Children's Pastor is simple enough. It means that they minister to the needs of children and their parents. The Children's Director is even more specific. The Children's Director does everything the Children's Pastor would do but this person is a woman.

5. Administrative Assistant

The Administrative Assistant to the Pastor of course is the same as the old Pastor's Secretary but the Administrative Assistant actually controls the Pastor, knows CPR and how to use anti-virus software.

6. The Minister of Technology

This is the guy (or gal) who knows how to use the anti-virus software but also adds presentation software, feedback, mic chords and automated thermostats to his sphere of responsibility (or blame).

7. Minister of Ecclesia

Talk about seeker sensitive! You say Minister of Eccelsia and the average Joe knows exactly how you spend your time.

8. The Minister of Connections

I visited a church in Maryland where every staff member's name and email address was listed with one exception. The pastor's email address was intentionally omitted. Under his name was his administrative assistant and her email address. But she was called the Director of Connections. So one would assume, if you want to contact the pastor, you've gotta have connections.

9. Creative Pastor

Here's another: The Creative Pastor. I can't help but wonder how makes the other pastors feel? And should we actually use adjectives in a job title. "If the Creative Pastor doesn't know, go ask the Intellegent Pastor or the Attractive Director. If all else fails you might just have to ask the Monotonous Pastor. He'll know. He always knows."

10. Executive Pastor of Operations

I visited a church website recently that had an Executive Pastor of Operations. I had to call about this title. It kept me up at night. What is a Pastor of Operations? Is this legal?

Does he do hernias? I learned that the Pastor of Operations is what we used to call the Facilities Manager. This man supervises the janitorial staff as well as the mantanence and repair of the church. That’s his vocation and ministry. My first thought was, “Wow! They must have an incredible middle school program!”

11 ????

Personally I think I’d be a great Minister of Apology. Every day I could get a list from all the other staff members in my mega-church. You know, the Minister of Technology, the Student Pastor, the Director of Childhood Ministries, the Pastor of Operations, and the Magnification Pastor. They could give me this list of people that I should, on behalf of the church, extend a deep and meaningful apology. But the Minister of Apology just doesn’t sound as hip and postmodern as the other members of the staff. Perhaps they could call me the Minister of Apologetics. But then again Apologetics means never having to say you’re wrong.

On top of that, if I became the Minister of Apology I would be doing the work of the most powerful person of the staff: The Receptionist.