

Mission and Discipleship Committee

Supplementary Report to the Eleventh General Assembly 2014

The Committee presents these additional items as noted in our report as contained in the Assembly papers.

1. Fresh Expressions, the Mission shaped Church and Mission month

The Mission Shaped Ministry course and material points to five fundamental shifts in Western culture as regards its relationship with the Church. First, the way 'Sunday' is viewed has changed. For many who work in the retail or entertainment industry, Sunday is a working day and for others, it is filled with school or sport commitments. Some find the working week so overwhelming that Sunday is spent purely in relaxation. Second, there has been a change in 'relationships', families live far from each other, some even live overseas. People are part of networks – these span continents, are sometimes around a common interest etc. Thirdly, 'culture' is changing. We no longer live in monocultural ghettos but within thoroughly a multi-cultural society. Within this society, many sub-cultures have developed around musical genre, fashion, common interest and values.

The fourth great change is a 'reduced knowledge of faith'. Children in Southern African schools are less likely to be exposed to religious education, hymn singing and saying "The Lord's prayer" in schools. Many children grow up without attending Church or Sunday School. The Church has been pushed to the edge of Western culture and we can't take a basic knowledge of faith and the Bible for granted any more. The fifth change is noticed in common conversation or in book shops. People are becoming less interested in formal religion and more interested in spirituality. Bookshops now stock a wide variety of "spiritual books" spanning faith experience from East to West. People are exploring their spirituality using an ever increasing array of spiritual tools.

What is important is not our opinion on our changing world, whether we think the changes are for the better or the worse, but rather how the Church will respond to them. Will we respond with authoritarian condemnation as we responded to advancements in science in the middle ages or will we look to see what God is doing in this changing world of His and participate in the building of God's kingdom?

The Mission Shaped Ministry (MSM) apprenticeship, offered by the Fresh Expressions movement in partnership with the Centre for Contextual Theology at the University of Pretoria, offers insights, skills and strategies for dealing with these realities. Some members of the M&D Committee are attending this 'course' in order that this knowledge can be passed on to the UPCSA.

This committee will seek opportunities to assist ministers and congregational leaders to meet the world around us in a Missional way in the year to come. We will offer opportunities for Presbytery mission leaders to be trained in new ways of doing Church.

A month of Mission Focus

In line with developing a healthy understanding of "Mission" in our congregations, it was felt that the committee could encourage the denomination to have a "Mission month" where preachers would be invited to use a series of sermon outlines that explore the ideas of mission. Alongside the preaching series, a set of daily readings could be given to congregants so that they would be reading passages that relate to the church's mission in their daily devotion. All this material would be freely available and if a specific month were identified (We're proposing October) and encouraged, we would have the whole denomination moving in the same direction with a wonderful focus on Mission.

A possible framework for this month could be to spend 4 or 5 Sundays looking at Philip in Acts 6, 8 and 21. Notice that in Philip we see the missionary movement described in Acts 1: 8 (Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and ends of the Earth) coming true. This simple framework could be expanded greatly:

1 Philip, a deacon, serving food - Mission is often service to the community. Explore Philip's character. The importance of service and social outreach. Extend this into community. Mission begins on our doorstep;

2 Philip, evangelist to the Samaritans. Mission is about crossing (racial and other) divides. Understand the brokenness between Jew and Samaritan. See how Philip (Greek name) is a bridge-builder. Discover how the Spirit empowers his work;

3 Philip, influencing Ethiopia. See how Philip, prompted by the Spirit, influences the Ethiopian official and then goes to Azotus. Mission is now extended to the ends of the earth. Consider the role of the Holy Spirit;

4 Philip, reaching the next generation. Consider how Philip's daughters are prophetesses (he has passed faith on to his children) and Paul visits them in Acts 21.

This four week sermon series could cover the whole gamut of Mission: Service (distributing food), the transformation of community in Samaria, one-on-one evangelism, and leaving a legacy. It also embraces a model of Mission near and far.

Along with this preaching guide, the daily readings for members could make a valuable addition, especially if themed to the sermon topics.

2. Mission Consultations

Thekwini

A visit of the M&D committee to the Presbytery of Thekwini is being planned. It was expected that this Consultation would take place before these supplementary papers were due but this has not been possible.

It is hoped that the consultation will now take place in August and the Presbytery Moderator has asked the committee delegation to address the whole Presbytery and their Fellowship of Vocation. In addition the Presbytery will also share some exciting plans about purchasing properties in areas of population growth as a strategic, proactive Missional initiative.

Limpopo – Vhembe Region

The Consultation was supposed to comprise three members of the Mission & Discipleship Committee namely the Revs. John McKane, Petson Kabala and Nokhalipha Nonjojo, but for various reasons only John McKane travelled to Vhembe. The Consultation also coincided with the Presbytery Tour of the Moderator of General Assembly, the Rt. Rev. Rod Botsis, who was visiting the same area.

The Consultation began on the afternoon of Monday, 19 May in Makhado (Louis Trichardt). 30 kilometres outside of town lies the Maebani township. In 2013 the Evangelical Confessing Church of South Africa (an independent church under the leadership of Dr. Nedohe who is an ex Lutheran Church Pastor) came into the UPCSA and became known as the Confessing Congregation of the UPCSA. The Church building stands on 60 hectares of land that has been given to the church by the traditional chief in the area. The building took approximately three months to build, but there have been some setbacks. One in particular is that the roof, which was built with inferior materials was completely blown away in recent high winds.

The plans for this Congregation going forward include completing the church building and then developing among other things: a clinic, a training centre, some agricultural undertakings etc.

On Tuesday morning the consultation travelled to the Mashamba Congregation, which is an Outstation of the Makwerela Congregation. The Congregation has 86 members who have been in the area for many years. They used to meet in another church building, but due to tribal conflicts they moved into the home of a member of the congregation before being given land by the local chief. Here they erected a new, albeit incomplete building.

The Consultation travelled to Thohoyandou in the afternoon with the Rev. Seani Mavhina. The congregation of Makwerela has a combined membership of around 1,000 people, which is made up of the main station and seven outstations. Makwerela was one of the three congregations that came about as a result of the Gooldville Congregation sub-division.

On Wednesday, the consultation had a look at a piece of land in Tshikonelo that has been donated to the UPCSA by the local chief. The area has a population of approximately 20,000 people and there are two mainline churches and five independent churches already in the area. A good number of professional people live

in the area, but work in and around Thohoyandou and commute in and out of the area on a daily basis using the local municipal bus service.

In order to secure the site for the UPCSAs a R3,000 tribute will need to be paid to the chief and the area will have to be fenced within six months, or we could lose the deal.

In the afternoon, the consultation moved onto the Matangari Congregation where they met with the Elders of Matangari where, once again, a presentation was made on the work of the Committee.

Thereafter the consultation moved on to the Thengwe outstation. "Thengwe" is the name of the local King who has been very generous in allocating land to the UPCSAs. This is due mainly to the significant work that the church does within the community.

The Matangari congregation was constituted in April 2004 and the stations that brought about the establishment of the Congregation were all outstations of the Gooldville mission namely: Matangari, Tshiumoni, Tshipako, Khubvi, Thengwe and Vuvha. Since 2004 two more outstations have been planted (namely Vuvha and Tshilamba), but in 2009 Tshilamba was closed down due to declining membership. In 2010 the leadership of Matangari resolved not to plant any new stations and resolved, rather, to grow the current eight outstations into self-sustaining congregations. It is a wonderfully ambitious dream given the prevalent church traditions and financial restrictions.

Three notable projects that Matangari are involved in are: The Gundo Community Development project, which is a drop-in Centre for the youth of the area who can drop-in after school to receive assistance with their homework; The Congregation is also involved in the Thengwe Thondoni Poultry Co-Operative, which is a chicken, egg, and vegetable farming undertaking, which sells produce to local vendors; The Thengwe outstation currently has a community crèche at the church site, but is about to move to a new piece of ground that has been donated to the church in order to accommodate the growing number of children.

Some of the challenges that face the Matangari Congregation are not uncommon to the other congregations in the rest of the cluster. One (main) congregation with many outstations relying on the services of only one minister, which inevitably results in overworked Elders (Teaching and Ruling); vast distances to travel within the parish on appalling roads; giving from a low income base and "competition" from mushrooming independent churches to name but a few. But in the midst of these challenges ministry and growth takes place.

In the afternoon the consultation spent some time in the company of the Rev. Dr. Robert Munthali who is the minister of the Gooldville Congregation, which up until the sub-division of the Congregation a number of years ago was the only Presbyterian Church in Venda. Gooldville has eleven outstations attached to it namely: Ha-Luvhimbi, Mukula, Vondwe, Ngudza, Mukumbani, Ngwenani, Ha-Mustha, Tsiozwi, Nancifield (Musina), Campbell and Harper.

The Congregation continues to grow and is involved in many new works in the surrounding villages as well as their long-standing ministry, which is a Secondary School with around 670 pupils next door to the church. Dr. Munthali believes that the sustained growth of the congregation over the 17 years that he has been the minister there can be attributed to (1) good pastoral care and love, and (2) the equipping of the Ruling Elders to grown outstations until they are capable of standing on their own as new congregations. This being said Dr. Munthali also believes that there are a fair number of outstations in his congregation as well as possibly other congregations within the area that could become new congregations in their own right, but who are reluctant to do so.

In a few short hours the consultation was able to visit six of Gooldville's outstations and to see the current and future work that is part of the life of the congregation. There is much happening and much more is planned going forward.

The visit also included a visit to the Donald Fraser Hospital, which was started as a ministry of the Church of Scotland, but really expanded and cemented itself into the community by Dr. Robert Douglas and Mrs. Emily Irene Aitken (former PCSA General Secretary Chris Aitken's parents). The Gooldville Congregation continues to have a strong link to the hospital in that the minister is also the Chaplain and is regularly called upon to render spiritual input.

The UPCSA is in very good spiritual health in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Presbytery. Under sometimes very trying and difficult circumstances churches are being built, the Word is being preached in and out of season, the Sacraments are being celebrated, Members and non-Members alike are being cared for in love and God's Kingdom is growing. All to the glory and honour of his name.

3. National Congregational Life Survey

On Friday 9 May 2014, members of the committee attended a presentation by Dr. Ruth Powell, a minister of the Uniting Church in Australia, and Director of the "National Congregational Life Survey". Working together with the University of Free State's Faculty of Theology, they are looking to provide their survey (which is also used in the Netherlands, the UK and the USA) to congregations in South Africa for use.

The Survey is a tried and tested tool which allows a congregation to survey the opinions of their leadership and their membership (even regular visitors) so that a profile can be developed. This profile can then be used to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the congregation. The tool becomes an instrument for growth in the hands of the congregation who can work on what they do well. If many congregations do the survey, the UPCSA (or one of its Presbyteries) can then also explore trends across a region or across the whole of the UPCSA.

The committee is recommending the use of this survey to its congregations, We hope to have clarity on what this will cost by the time we make our report to General Assembly. The committee is also considering using this survey in all Grant receiving congregations. There are already some congregations that have shown interest in using the survey in a pilot project.

4. **Proposed Changes to the Manual arising out of Assembly decisions on the OSLM**

Please find attached, as **Appendix 1**, the proposed changes to the Manual which are consequential to decisions of the Assembly and Executive Commission relating to the Order of Supportive Lay Ministries.

5. **The foundations course for the OSLM**

The committee is in the process of compiling a foundations course for the OSLM, which will be an introduction to the UPCS. It is intended to serve as a grounding, an orientation and an ethos defining exercise for those entering the Order of Supportive Lay Ministries. It serves as a "basic minimum" for those who would answer the call to offer themselves in service of the Church, and in particular in Presbyterian and United Congregations.

It needs to be borne in mind that this course will have a wide audience: From people who don't have matric all the way through to those who have studied at post-graduate level. The idea is that the course will take the form of 5 assignments which come in the form of a booklet with spaces to fill in answers which can be posted or e-mailed. Each assignment will involve some Bible Study, convey some key information and get the candidate to answer three kinds of questions: Content, interpretation and application.

The course will be administered as follows: The modules will be sent to OSLM applicants one at a time. They will complete the module and send it back where it will be reviewed. Comments will be sent back to the applicant along with the next module to be completed. The idea is that this should be a journey and people should be discouraged from doing all five modules at once, but rather engage in a dialogical process.

Overview of the course:

1. **Overview of the Gospel and the Apostle's Creed**

a) a Bible Study on Ephesians 2 dealing with concepts like sin, justification, grace and sanctification.

(b) an exercise with the Apostle's Creed
Getting the candidate to put concepts in their own words possibly in conjunction with Col.1: 15 -23.

(c) Requiring the candidate to communicate their own testimony.

2. The Call to Servant Leadership

- (a) Examine John 13 and Jesus' other sayings about Servant Leadership;
- (b) Emphasise the nature of the Order of Supportive Lay Ministries;
- (c) "Not all of you should presume to be teachers" (James 3 & 1 Tim 4).

3. Understanding our Presbyterian Heritage – Essentials of Reformed Theology

- (a) The Five Solas (*Sola Scriptura, Sola Christus, Sola Gratia, Sola Fide & Soli Deo Gloria*);
- (b) Understanding our form of government (Conciliar Leadership, Corporate Discernment, Priesthood of all Believers);
- (c) Understanding the Sacraments and other practices (Confirmation etc).

4. Skills needed for good service

- (a) Personal Piety and Compassionate Love;
- (b) Good Communication and Administration;
- (c) Leadership by Mentoring and Conflict Resolution.

5. Case Study: Barnabas

- (a) Barnabas as a person of generosity, discernment and availability;
- (b) Barnabas as person of piety ("A good man, full of the **Holy Spirit** and faith");
- (c) Barnabas as a person humble enough to recognise that the Church needed Paul.

6. Resources on Evangelism and Discipleship

In the report of the committee, we reported that Willow Creek offer a basic evangelism primer called *Just walk across the room*. This is an evangelism programme that focuses on relationships and authenticity rather than a methodology or a recipe. It reminds us that we reach out to others because we love God and because we love those we are trying to reach.

The course is divided into four sessions:

The Single Greatest Gift: Exploring the wonder of being able to share our faith;

Living in 3D: Develop friendships, Discover life stories and Discern appropriate next steps;

Story Telling: Recognising that our own faith story is a very powerful resource;

Grander Vision Living: Moving from a "stuff"-focused life to being people centred.

This DVD-based course can be purchased from Willow Creek South Africa. Its discussion guide is more suited for an American context, but one of our local congregations developed discussion material that works better in our South African

context. This is available on the Mission & Discipleship website. The committee will distribute an implementation Guide aimed at the South African context at General Assembly.

In addition, the committee has reviewed Bill Hybels' book *The Volunteer Revolution*, an inspiring book discussing the nature of the Church as communal. The participation of the people of God in the life and work of the Church is essential to the Church's health. See **Appendix 2** attached. We hope this review will inspire you to read the book.

Lastly, the Committee as part of the Committee's Discipleship Focus, we would like to make suggestions about finding ways to help our members develop a vibrant spirituality. Some readers may be familiar with the *Emmaus* or *Chrysalis* weekends that aim to take participants on a "pilgrimage of Faith." Although mainly suburban churches have been familiar with these courses, which are run ecumenically by interdenominational bodies, the committee spent quite a lot of time exploring the concept of spiritual pilgrimage and how this could be best applied in various contexts in our denomination. Among options explored were *Presbyterian Cursillo* (a weekend retreat run among Churches of the PC(USA) and *Emmaus* (a Methodist Spiritual retreat programme). Our biggest concern was that *Emmaus* and its derivatives were used mainly by more wealthy suburban congregations and involved a "weekend away", usually at fairly high cost. The conclusion was to work at developing a "retreat-experience guide/workbook" that a congregation could implement over a weekend (whether by going away to a retreat centre, or by gathering at their local church buildings or even in a small group retreat setting). The material should aim to be flexible and contemplative and should engender a lively community-based spirituality in our congregation settings. This material should also be copyright free in order that congregations have no major cost barriers to running a weekend like this. We hope to have a first draft ready soon and would love to have congregations test it and give us feedback.

7. **Minimum Stipends and Allowances for 2015**

The Committee has consulted with relevant Presbytery M&D Committees and is proposing the following minimum Stipends, Travel allowances and Pulpit Supply fees for Zambia for the year 1 January to 31 December 2015:

Minimum Stipends: increase from ZK 2 500 (2014) to ZK (2015).

Minimum Travel Allowance: increase from ZK 250 (2014) to ZK (2015).

Pulpit Supply: increase from ZK 250 (2014) to ZK (2015)

This is the proposal for Zimbabwe:

Minimum Stipends:

	2014	2015
0 - 5 years.	US\$ 792.	US\$ 800
6 - 15 years.	US\$ 861.	US\$ 870
16 - 25 years.	US\$ 899.	US\$ 910
26 - 35 years.	US\$ 931.	US\$ 940
35 years +	US\$963.	US\$ 970

We recognised that this is only a very small increase but the Zimbabwe Presbytery has surveyed each congregation in the Presbytery and this is all they are able to do in the present economic climate. (Some say only 30 or 40% of Zimbabweans are formally employed.

Minimum Travel Allowance: stays the same at **US\$ 150.**

Pulpit Supply: stays the same at **US\$ 45.**

The committee is proposing the following minimum Stipends for the year 1 January – 31 December 2015 for ministers living and working in South Africa:

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
0 – 5 years	R 6 148	R 6 516
6 – 15 years	R 6 589	R 6 984
16 – 25 years	R 7 238	R 7 672
26 – 35 years	R 8 399	R 8 903
35 years +	R 9 208	R 9 760

For ministers in South Africa, a monthly travel allowance of **R 5 130** (R4 840 in 2014) is proposed.

We propose a pulpit supply fee of **R 480** (R 450 in 2014) per service in South Africa.

GW Marchinkowski

CONVENER

Proposals:

1. The Assembly receives the Supplementary report.
2. The Assembly resolves

- (a) to make the month of October "Mission month" for congregations within the UPCSA;
 - (b) that the M&D Committee should construct a series of Sermon outlines that may be used by preachers during "Mission month" and distribute these to all congregations of the Church.
3. The Assembly notes the information on mission consultations (section 2 of the supplementary report) contained in the report.
4. The Assembly
 - (a) calls on all congregations of the UPCSA to explore the "National Congregational Life survey" as a tool that may be used to consider the life of individual congregations;
 - (b) instructs the committee to provide all congregations of the UPCSA with information about the NCLS.
5. The Assembly adopts the changes to the *Manual* outlined in Appendix 1 to this supplementary report and refers these to the Faith and Order committee for inclusion in the *Manual of Faith and Order*.
6. The Assembly notes the outline of the Foundations course for members of the Order of Supportive Lay Ministries in section 5 of this report.
7. The Assembly draws to the attention of congregations the resources, *Just walk across the Room* and *the Volunteer Revolution* as outlined by the committee.
8. The Assembly sets the minimum Stipends, monthly travel allowances and pulpit supply fees for Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa as outlined in section 7 of the supplementary report.

Appendix 2: Review: The Volunteer Revolution

Title: The Volunteer Revolution – unleashing the power of everybody

Author: Bill Hybels

Publisher: Zondervan, GrandRapids

Date of Publication: 2004

1. This is what I was made for!

Bill was asked: "Do you ever feel guilty for asking busy people to volunteer?"

His answer was "NO!":

- (c) It gives people something to do for God's kingdom;
- (d) We're created to join God's Mission – to redeem and fix the planet – and not just chase the wind;
- (e) We all have the desire to change the world... "You know what I did today? I teamed up with God to change the world!"

What does a transformed world look like?

- Love God and neighbor
- Have a value-system that values the poor and powerless
- Take up the cross – pay the price
- Go into all the world
 - This is what service is all about!

For most people the moment of choice occurs during an experience of worship – we realise "I want to serve the purposes of God in my generation!"

I would rather be a participant than a spectator! Participation fosters ownership, friendship and growth! "Thanks for inviting me into the game!"

People may have to experiment, but when they find their niche, they experience satisfaction and joy.

2. I can't believe I get to do this!

Story of Eric and Karen who bailed out of corporate busy-ness into a life of voluntary service.

1. Volunteering can be negative:
 - Poorly conceived; unfulfilling; Nothing really to do; No clear vision of the difference they make in the bigger picture; not thanked.
2. Key questions that should be asked:
 - Are we caring for our volunteers? - Are we training them adequately?
 - Are there better ways to recruit helpers? - Are our long-term team members still happy, growing, part of the team, and energised by the vision?

3. Some examples:
 - Gardening; Feeding Schemes; Seat cleaners; Trash-emptying; babysitting for parents who volunteer elsewhere.
4. Lack of funding can be a huge gift – harness the “power of everybody”!
5. What do you have to offer? We have been blessed to be a blessing!

“There is not enough money in the world to pay for all the good deeds desperately needing to be done in the name of God in my church and yours, in my community and yours, in my country and yours.”

3. Servanthood – The great gamble

We love, serve, and care for others because that is normal behavior for people who are filled with God’s Spirit. We are Christians. Christ was the ultimate servant. We can’t help but serve because the Spirit of the Servant has filled our hearts. When we serve, we are just being who we naturally are.

Steve Sjogren (Seeing Beyond Church Walls, 2002, p.39)

Our culture bombards us with self-gratification. Servanthood, though Spirit-instinctive, is foreign to our sinful natures and to our culture. Service means we get busier and there are no financial rewards. Hybels speaks of his mentor – Dr Bilezikian – who said: “True fulfillment will never come through self-gratification.” Service is the key, and the rewards are great (Mark10:29-30). “You want to really live? Drape a serving towel over your arm!”

Look at the service examples of Christ (John 13, Phil.2) And what about Paul? “My name is Paul and I am a servant of Christ Jesus!”

So take the **Gamble!** Take every opportunity to serve and then do it! It brought about enormous spiritual growth for Hybels and the youth group that became Willow Creek Church.

4. The Great Exchange

It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself

Ralph Waldo Emerson

He lists examples of people who went out to build churches and other missions. The common phrase among those who returned was “I received more than I gave!”

- Hearts were transformed; Inner Pain was healed; Relationships were healed; They got a chance to give back for what they had been blessed with; Saw God do in others what He had done in them; Got a new perspective - "My problems aren't so big..."; Formal serving encourages informal serving; domestic relationships improve.

Talks about the "Helper's High" and the fact that retired men live 2.5 times longer if they are involved in voluntary work. (These, and other physical benefits are because we have been created to serve.)

5. **What? Me? A priest?**

In the OT the Holy Spirit only acted in the priests and only some were priests. At Pentecost, the Spirit was poured out on everyone. We believe in and should practice the Priesthood of All Believers.

What does a priest do? Prays, encourages, watches over, confronts, grieves, and rejoices.

How does this make the congregation feel? Loved, nurtured, secure, blessed.

He interprets Ephesians 4 as saying that there are those who equip the rest for service.

When this happens, then everybody wins:

- Equippers see God using the volunteers; Volunteers get on the playing field and are used by God; The Community is served; God is glorified!

Unfortunately the church lost the vision of the priesthood of all believers. We have become like the world: We expect doctors to treat us, not train us to treat others!

But in the church it should be that ministers train us to minister to others! Christian pastors should be working themselves out of jobs! We have to be the equippers. We should not relent! Bill gives the example of preaching on service for 13 weeks!

"You can't build a God-honouring church with a congregation full of consumers."

Remember: Get it right and everyone wins!

6. Just jump in!

What's the key to finding your niche? Just jump in and start experimenting!

In the past he would have said: Learn about gifts, reflect, identify gifts and passion and get involved where you fit. (This is what their highly successful "Network" course is all about.) But they learned some hard lessons:

1. In the beginning everyone worked flat out with great intensity, but many burned out! Now they ask: "What are you good at and what energises you?" They have also learned to ask: "What are you bad at and what drains you?"
2. They also realised that people could wait too long to find "the perfect fit for their gift mix."
3. The gift assessment tools just didn't work for everyone.

"Here's what we recommend to potential volunteers these days. Embrace wholeheartedly your fundamental identity as a servant of Christ. Use whatever understanding you have of your personality, passions, areas of interest, talents, and preferences to guide you in a general serving direction. Look at the needs of your community. Then jump in with a willing heart and an open mind. Drape the servant's towel over your arm and get busy."

They came up with the *first serve* idea: "Come once and check it out – no strings attached!"

After a first serve they ask four important questions:

Did it feel meaningful? Was your emotional energy higher or lower afterward? Did you enjoy serving others? Can you realistically fit this into your schedule?

If so, then jump in!

7. Using your skills to find your passion

Gives the example of the CARS (Christian Auto Repairman Serving) ministry which repairs 20-25 cars per week for needy folk. Whole lot of other examples too...

What makes you passionate? Energy flows from passion. Our skills, when linked to passion can unleash great satisfaction. (eg's of hairdresser's day of beauty, Aviation ministry, and a Ski camp.)

Sometimes people need to try something different. e.g. Of Rich who works with big corporates all week, but helps needy families out of financial messes on a one to one coaching basis. Others are happier working with something familiar. These are people who use skills that they've honed in the marketplace. e.g. Of the Willow HR Board that is made up of Lawyers, HealthCare gurus, and HR people.

For all this to work: Volunteers must be tenacious in volunteering and existing leaders must be open to sharing power. One needs to use a common sense approach. Each situation is unique. There are four questions that are helpful:

Who has God brought us? What are their unique contributions? How does the Spirit seem to be leading us? What does common sense say?

8. People-driven passion

Carrie was passionate about Spanish. Now serves a Hispanic ministry and combines gifts of music, leadership, language, and admin with a group of people she is passionate about. When people described in chapter 7 combine their skills and passion with a particular group that they feel for, it all takes off!

The passion can be about a group or an issue: e.g. Divorce, grief, homeless, etc. Sometimes we will be caught by surprise and discover that we are passionate for a group we did not think we would be passionate about. That is why it is important to be obedient to the call of service and serve with open hearts and ears!

9. Don't forget to ask!

The tragedy is that the church does not do this well! There are many ways: A challenging sermon series that moves people from the sidelines - "It's time!"; Making needs known so that people can respond in the areas of their passion; Give a clear how and where! Personal asks are more effective than public ones, and are most effective when they come from folk who are volunteers themselves! But full-time people must model the ask.

How to ask: (Great example given in the book)

1. Don't ask for a long term commitment, but don't hold back on the size of the vision!
2. Cast the vision! Persist! Ask! Pray! Ask again!
3. Give lots of info and detail.
4. Debrief after any exposure and learn from the negative experiences.

5. Tweak the job if need be to suite the person.

They learned three key lessons:

1. New volunteers are fragile: Prone and vulnerable to *discouragement* and *disillusionment*. This happens when people feel trapped, abandoned, shoehorned into a bad fit, or ill-equipped. Respond to pleas for help, provide training and follow-up!
2. The easiest way to defeat a volunteer is to waste their time or completely overload them. Care for your volunteers.
3. Remind them that this is worth it – they are not crazy. 1 Cor 15:58.

10. Over the long haul... (Gal.6:9-10)

What should be done to encourage those who are in danger of the "Helper's High" wearing off?

1. Memory of their early days of ministry and late night meals in "Tasty's Diner" where they reflected on the services and shared community. One of the things that has kept them serving in the long run (which should be the norm) was community. Make sure people are plugged into caring community as this helps keep them there for the long haul.
2. Emphasize the transformation of those we serve. (1 Thess 3:8 & 3 John 4) There are disappointments, but breakthroughs keep us going! They use baptism services as a way of saying "this is all worth it!"
3. Make sure that you practice self-care. This is the middle ground between selfishness and selflessness. If you have said "I'd rather burn out than rust," you probably will! Ministry is not a sprint, but a marathon! "Serve the Lord with *gladness!*" And "come into His presence with *singing.*"
4. Sustained Servanthood flows from Spiritual Fullness. What's your fuel? Guilt? Earning Favour? Need to be needed? We need to draw near to God and be filled with His love and grace.

11. The power of doing good!

We are called to do good deeds – to overcome evil with good (Rom 12: 20-21). It begins with people – average everyday people – doing little things that will change the world! Great quote about changing the world and inspiring others on pg.136.

A volunteer revolution needs committed-give-it-all-you-got revolutionaries who will not shrink back from the vision of communities committed to God-honouring visions that will do good wherever they can.

“Do Something, Somewhere – Now!

There’s a good deed out there with your name all over it!”