



Serving the Lord Jesus Christ with our Spiritual Gifts

by Pastor Scott Boerckel

Periodically, surveys of Christians are made on the matter of spiritual gifts. Here are some of the recent conclusions:

1. The number of people who claim the spiritual gift of “encouragement” is growing, and the number of people who claim the spiritual gift of “evangelism” is all but disappearing.
2. The focus of all Christians has increased on their giftings, abilities, and skills and has declined on the supernatural endowment of the Holy Spirit for given work in God’s kingdom.
3. Only about half of Christians see that the church is the place where spiritual gifts are developed and deployed.
4. Younger Christian adults claim to have better grasp on their spiritual gifts than older Christians and claim to be using them to a far greater degree than older Christians.

(continued on page 2)

The disciples knew that it was only the least who washed feet. They preferred to remain seated with filthy feet rather than be considered least. Then Jesus took a towel and completely redefined greatness. Christ left all those who would follow him an example...serve. Christians who are Growing in Christ will serve in ways small and large as the Holy Spirit enables them.

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Serving the Lord Jesus Christ with our Spiritual Gifts, continued

Clearly, there is a disconnect between how Christians are thinking these days and the scripture's teaching on spiritual gifts. How can we learn to serve the Lord Jesus Christ with our spiritual gifts?

First, there are some ways that are likely to be ineffective. These ways are not necessarily wrong; they just won't get you to the place where you know your gifts and how to use them. For example, many Christians take spiritual gift inventories which are designed to identify a Christian's preferences and capabilities. It is not wrong to take such a survey, but it is important to note that such an inventory will likely be a better measuring stick of one's personality than it will be a measuring stick of one's spiritual gifts.

Another wrong way is to think of spiritual gifts as a means of personal improvement. Churches often offer spiritual gifts assessments for this wrong reason of catering to an individual's hunger to be more fulfilled. The purpose of spiritual gifts is not personal fulfillment, even though many times the person who deploys their spiritual gifts often ends up having a sense of personal fulfillment. That is a secondary rather than a primary purpose of spiritual gifts.

So, the key question that this article addresses is: How can a person serve the Lord Jesus Christ with their spiritual gifts?

First, the person needs to be saved.

This is where many people can be confused today. Spiritual gifts are not talents, skills, or abilities that come from natural endowment. Spiritual gifts are given to the believer by the Holy Spirit when that believer comes into the body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:13 describes this as the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is NOT some ecstatic experience accompanied by the spiritual gift of speaking in tongues. Rather, it is the full immersing of the believer into the

body of Christ, the church, to serve that body with the gifts that the Holy Spirit distributes individually as the Holy Spirit wills it. So, a person needs to be saved in order to have spiritual gifts, and the use of the spiritual gifts is for the building up of the church, Christ's body. See how 1 Corinthians 12 describes the necessity of salvation and being placed in the body of Christ to serve the body with our spiritual gifts:

1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11-13: Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. ⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good... ¹¹ All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. ¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

Second, the saved person needs to know that the purpose of his or her spiritual gifts is not personal fulfillment but the surrender of self for the building up of Christ's body to the glory of God.

We can get testy if we think that gifts are about personal fulfillment. We can think that our gifts are underappreciated; we can think that not enough recognition is being given to ourselves or to others that we love. But the point of spiritual gifts is not the acknowledgment of them. The point of spiritual gifts is to serve the body of Christ in humility with them. See how Ephesians 4 describes how the purpose of spiritual gifts is for the building up of the body of Christ, not for personal fulfillment.

Ephesians 4:4-13: There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who



is over all and through all and in all. ⁷ But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸ Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." ⁹ (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) ¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

Third, the saved person using his or her spiritual gifts for building up the body of Christ must do so with an intense focus on humility and sober judgment about oneself.

It is too easy to think that one gift is more important than another. It is too easy to imagine ourselves more highly than we should. See how Romans 12 describes how we ought to think of ourselves in the exercise of our spiritual gifts.

Romans 12:3-8: *For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober*

judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷ if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸ the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Fourth, the saved person using his or her spiritual gifts for building up the body of Christ in all humility must do all for the glory of God through Jesus Christ.

A great deal of emphasis can be misplaced on the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the exercise of spiritual gifts. Indeed, the Spirit is the one who endows believers with spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:11), BUT the goal is not to emphasize the Holy Spirit. The goal is ever to glorify God the Father through Jesus Christ. See how 1 Peter describes our great aim in the exercise of our spiritual gifts.

1 Peter 4:10-11: *As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: ¹¹ whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

Be on the look out for more instruction on spiritual gifts, particularly on how to identify our spiritual gifts in the sermons on 1 Corinthians during May and June.

May God be glorified through Jesus Christ as each believer at East White Oak with humility uses the spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit has given them to build up the body of Christ.



Serving with Helping Hands

by Jamie Somers

I'll never forget a story my mother-in-law, Ruth, told me about coming home from the hospital with her newborn baby.

Before she could set the car seat down, her husband plopped down on the couch and asked, "What's for dinner, Babe?" He was a notorious jokester!

Sometimes getting dinner on the table can feel especially difficult. When our first baby arrived, before I could even begin to think of how I might cut up an onion while holding a newborn, people started showing up at our doorstep with delicious meals. We were so touched and thankful to be served in this way.

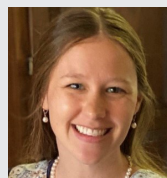
Taking care of dinner can be such a practical way to serve others, because no matter what's going on in life, we all need to eat!

My husband and I wanted to provide this same blessing to others. For the past several years, we always eagerly check the weekly e-bulletin to see if any babies have been born. Most of the time we're able to connect with the moms to ask if getting a meal or starting a meal train (a handy way to organize multiple meals for a person or family) would help, and just about every time it works out. It is a pleasure being able to serve in this way, because we've been there and know what a sweet gift it is to have dinner taken care of.



We've found it isn't just families who are welcoming babies who could use a meal. Sometimes it's someone who has had surgery, is sick, or is going through a difficult or particularly busy time. A gift card to their favorite restaurant is also a great way to help. Taking care of dinner can be such a practical way to serve others, because no matter what's going on in life, we all need to eat!

Providing practical help to those in our church who need it is a blessing-- both to those serving and to those being served. Did you know that East White Oak has formed an official group to facilitate serving our church family in practical ways? We call this team "Helping Hands". Contact the church office if you would like to be part of the group!



Jamie and her husband Michael, have been attending East White Oak since they moved to Hudson 6 years ago. They live just down the road from church with Grandma Ruth (Amma) and their daughters (Eleanor, Atalie, Alette, Audrey, and sweet baby Somers on the way). Jamie is a homeschooling homemaker with a penchant for a nice cup of hot cocoa and is excited to be one of East White Oak's Helping Hands!



Unseen Service Matters

by Candi Smith

Eight years ago, I went back to the classroom teaching full time. Although I knew God had called me to my job, I still wanted to serve at church.

My most recent endeavor has been the Resource Room. I knew about the Resource Room from my time teaching a Children's Bible Fellowship in the past. The Resource Room volunteers were always willing to help me find supplies and to assist me in any way they could. I could trace, cut, find supplies, and be friendly! This was the job for me.



Does cutting out shapes, organizing crayons, and making copies have any part in furthering the kingdom of God? Colossians 3:23 says, "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men." Working behind the scenes allows me the unique privilege of praying for the teachers who come in for help. I pray for wisdom and clarity as they prepare for the lesson they are about to teach. As I cut out a donkey or help a teacher locate a flannelgraph, I pray for the salva-

Each week I serve, I have the opportunity to "do life" with the other volunteers.

tion of the children who are blessed to hear the gospel each week. Serving also builds community. Each week I serve, I have the opportunity to "do life" with the other volunteers. To be able to pray and walk beside fellow believers is a great gift.

I have served in both seen and unseen ways in the nineteen years I have attended East White Oak. They are both equally important. There are a variety of ways you too can serve. What gifts or talents do you have that could fulfill a role? Where is God calling you to serve? No service is unimportant.



Candi Smith has worked in various ministries in her years at East White Oak. She is married to Ben. They have three daughters: Olivia, Elizabeth, and Lanie. She has worked at Cornerstone Christian Academy for eight years and is currently in Academic Support.



Coordinating Connection

by Amanda Andris

How well do you know those you sit beside in your Adult Bible Fellowship?

Do you know what they do for a living, their hobbies & interests, how each couple met, their kids, etc.? In Fellowship 13, we participate in something called “Supper Six” to share the parts of our lives we don’t hear about every Sunday morning.

Supper Six typically has 3-4 couples who meet once a month for a meal, typically supper. Each month, one couple hosts and provides the main course while the other couples bring along sides and dessert. After those 3 or 4 months, you switch up groups and get to know new couples! Fellowship 13 has been participating in Supper Six off and on for many years now and it is always something that we come back to. The casual atmosphere around someone’s dinner table allows for

The casual atmosphere around someone’s dinner table allows for more lighthearted and spontaneous discussion.

more lighthearted and spontaneous discussion. And you’re doing all this over a fabulous meal (shoutout to Abigail Jones’ petal bread)!

I have been setting up Supper Six groups for Fellowship 13 since last fall and it is an incredibly easy, yet rewarding way to serve. The time I spend putting together new groups each round is very minimal. And the time spent in fellowship with other believers is time well spent. I walk away from each Supper Six having learned something new about those I sit beside each week. I love to see how much of a blessing it has been to those who participate.

I think everyone has a part in building a faith-nurturing community in ABFs and I’m happy to serve in this small way in my ABF.



Amanda is married to Ryan and spends her days with their four children, twins Landon & Leighton (6), Rowen (4), and Austin (1). She serves in the East White Oak nursery, and helps with summer Children’s Ministry. For fun, you’ll find Amanda reading, cheering on the St. Louis Cardinals, traveling, and spending time with friends and family.

Interested in Serving?

There are so many opportunities to serve!



Worship Ministry

▶ Offer your gifts to the body of Christ for His glory alone!



Welcome Ministry

▶ This team includes Ushers, Greeters, Welcome Center staff



Behind the Scenes

▶ This important team includes Audio/Visual, Kitchen, Library, Transportation, and much more.



Children / Adults

▶ There are many opportunities to give back to any of these age-specific groups.

Check out our website to request more information about these ministries and many more!

eastwhiteoak.church/serve



East White Oak
BIBLE CHURCH



Serving the Church Through Singing

by Andrew Thompson

To those outside the Church, it may seem like a strange and unfamiliar sight—hundreds of people gathered together, lifting up their voices and singing together. Out loud.

Sometimes one or two brave souls might even lift up a hand or two! It is my prayer that this occurrence not become so commonplace that we miss the power and importance of this wonderful aspect to our weekly worship services.

You have probably heard someone describe a typical worship service as, “First we worship, then the pastor preaches the sermon.” Romans 12, however, explains that all of life ought to be an act of worship.

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” – Romans 12:1-2

The preaching is as much a chance for worship as the singing! As is the time spent in prayer, reading the Word, talking with friends, lunch afterwards, laying your head on the pillow and every moment in between.

So why the emphasis on singing? In as much as one might mistake the singing for the worship, and the sermon for the preaching; it is the singing that can so often have a deeper and more impactful penetration to our soul. The songs we sing preach to us just as much as that amazing sermon from Pastor Scott. These lyrics, sung together as one body, have a way of



injecting theology into our hearts that often stick with us for a lifetime.

It is my honor and great joy to serve the Body of Christ in this way. My fellow song leaders and I take such great care to choose songs that preach the Gospel and teach the Word correctly. Musical styles, preferences, volume and other technicalities are all things we think about (and certainly these preferences change over the years!) but one thing should remain constant; that our hearts and minds are filled with Gospel-centered, Christ-honoring, Rooted in Scripture songs that make less of us, and much of Christ.



Andrew Thompson regularly serves as a musician and worship leader. He and his wife Ashleigh were married at East White Oak in 2004. They have four children, Alyssa, Austin, Abram and Ava. Andrew works at Chevy and enjoys bluegrass, outdoor activities, woodworking and taking things apart to see what's inside.



Leaders Who Serve

by Adam Garey

When Joe Rich* had to leave the elder team five years ago because of a job-related move, I had the privilege of being invited back to the East White Oak elder team to fill his term.

The elders at East White Oak are tender-hearted men who seek to serve the people who come to our local fellowship—from long-time church members, to newcomers, to those who are engaging in the Pathways of Discipleship to strengthen their faith, to those who are struggling in various ways. The elders get involved in very personal matters of members as needed, which can be complicated and require a great deal of wisdom. In all, they seek to stay true to the Bible, to bring glory to the Lord in all circumstances, and to minister reconciliation where there might be division among people and/or between individuals and God.

The elders also oversee the East White Oak ministries and programs. This leads to more “church business” topics such as helping set budget priorities, approving special missions gifts, and deciding how to conduct our services (such as during and after our pandemic).

This sounds like work that is full of difficulty. Yet 1 Timothy 3:1 shares a “trustworthy saying” that “If anyone aspires to the office of overseer (elder), he desires a noble task.” Why would that be? Because the ministries of East White Oak are important to God’s work of building His kingdom. Because each person in our fellowship has a precious heart that the Lord seeks to draw nearer to Him. Because the Lord has blessed our fellowship

The elders get involved in **very personal matters** of members as needed, which can be complicated and require a great deal of **wisdom.**

with great resources to apply to His work. There is much joy in the ministry of an East White Oak elder.

Working alongside such humble and wise men is a privilege. The elders spend extended times of prayer about all of the topics above, and many more. These are joyous times of intercession and renewing of our own minds and hearts with a deeper affection for our Lord and the people of East White Oak.

Having now finished my term, I will pray for our pastors and elders, and I would encourage all reading this to keep them on your hearts as well.



Adam Garey has been a member of East White Oak for 18 years. He is married to Danielle. They have four grown children and a daughter-in-law. Adam works in the Technology division at COUNTRY Financial. Adam has served as a deacon, elder, and ABF leader at East White Oak.

** Joe was recently diagnosed with laryngeal cancer. Let’s keep Joe in our prayers that God might heal him completely from his medical challenges.*



A Summer Investment in Children's Ministry

by Tonya Southwood

For the past 10 years I have greatly enjoyed the privilege and blessing of serving and interacting with many of the children at East White Oak's Sunday morning Summer Children's Ministry.

For those of you not familiar with this unique short-term children's ministry opportunity, there are a variety of ways to serve. I've been a teacher, but it takes an entire team to make the summer great for the kids.



The summer program changes up Sunday mornings from the regular school year program in a couple of ways. First of all, the children have the opportunity to learn from different teachers each week and are assisted by a loving team of spiritually nurturing adults. Secondly, each Sunday gives the children a VBS-like experience presenting a fun theme that runs throughout the summer. This summer's theme is "Cruisin' with Paul"

lessons about Paul's missionary journeys. Each weekly session includes an activity or craft, lesson time, game time, small group time and reflection time to reinforce the biblical truth taught in that week's lesson.

Some of the most rewarding times I have experienced in my years spent teaching are when the lessons encouraged the children to revisit a familiar Bible story (such as Daniel in the Lion's Den or Jesus Feeds the 5,000) from a fresh new perspective. They are so eager, willing, and able to be led in the discovery of deeper Biblical truths and seem to enjoy learning something new from God's Word each week!

It takes an entire team to make the summer great for the kids.

If you have never been a volunteer in Sunday morning Summer Children's Ministry, or if it has been a while, I hope you will consider joining the team this summer so you can experience the blessing of being a vital part of the spiritual nurture of the elementary-aged children of East White Oak.



Tonya Southwood has served in Children's Ministry for the past 20 years. She is married to Klayton, and they have 3 grown children. She is an elementary substitute teacher who has a passion for teaching God's Word at an after-school Bible Club at Oakdale Elementary. In her spare time, she enjoys taking care of her menagerie of farm animals.



Profile of a Proven Servant

by Andrew Woodman

More than a handful of times in the past six years, someone at East White Oak has said something to me along the lines of, “I had no idea you were a deacon!”

I think that if you were to ask any of the six men that currently serve as deacons, they would be perfectly OK with that statement.

The word “deacon” comes from the Greek word for “servant.” At East White Oak, the role of a deacon is just that—participating in various ministries, figuring out where the needs are, and quietly serving to fill those needs. So, what do deacons actually do? That list is long and varied, but here are a few examples:

- Each month, deacons make sure that the communion elements are prepared and ready.
- Deacons assist with budget planning and provide another set of eyes for the church finances.
- They continuously help to make sure our vans are ready and in working condition.
- They assist with repairs around the building, including many recent technology updates.
- Deacons and their wives provide backstage assistance during baptisms.
- They are ready and able to help if a ministry has an unexpected need.
- Deacons participate in monthly meetings with the elders which include Bible study and prayer.

During 2022, the elders and deacons had a goal of digging deeper and refining the role of a deacon at East White Oak. During a summer retreat, we landed on these words from 1 Timothy 3:10 as being particularly meaningful: “and let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blame-

The **role of a deacon** is just that—participating in various ministries, figuring out where the needs are, and **quietly serving** to fill those needs.

less.” From that verse, we have adopted the term “Proven Servants,” to describe our role here at East White Oak. We want to work in the background to serve each ministry, wherever the need might be. Does that mean that volunteers that serve in other capacities at East White Oak are somehow less important? Absolutely not! 1 Corinthians 12 makes it abundantly clear that the body of Christ is made up of many different parts, and we are all needed in order to make it function correctly. Deacons are simply one specific group called on to serve in a special way.

So, what is a deacon? Deacons are simply Proven Servants, coming alongside and helping other East White Oak ministries as we all seek to grow in Christ and make disciples.



Andrew Woodman serves as a deacon at East White Oak. He is married to Kimberly. They have four children between the ages of 3 and 15. He currently works at State Farm as a Technical Architect. Andrew enjoys woodworking, home projects, being outdoors, and keeping up with his kids' music and sporting events.

VolunTour

Find a place to serve!

BONUS SESSION ADDED!

Sunday, May 28
9:00 or 10:30 AM
Connections Room

Gather around coffee and pastries to learn about the unique package of talents, personality, and interests that you are. Consider how God might have prepared you to be a blessing to others. Come learn about Children's Ministry, Greeters, Music Ministry, or behind-the-scenes volunteering such as in the Kitchen, Media/Tech, the Library, and many more.

If you've never attended VolunTour, this is a great opportunity!
Explore all the different ways you could be serving at East White Oak.



The Lord brought you to East White Oak. It's exciting to think about where He might want you to jump in!



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