



## The Story of SCOLBE

*"One of the major issues facing not-for-profit organizations today is how to strengthen internal operations and infrastructure. SCOLBE advisors have years of experience in strategic planning, financial matters and communications – all necessities in today's world. By lending their acumen and expertise, they are empowering ministries with the counsel and recommendations they need to make positive changes."*

**–Ruth Henrichs, President and CEO,  
Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska**



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## Introduction

*And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. 1 Corinthians 12:28 NIV*

The Service Corps of Lutheran Business Executives was created for the purpose of providing administrative solutions to Christian Ministries.

An investment in SCOLBE is an investment in helping Christian ministries grow their mission, through more children attending Christian camps, more students attending Christian schools, more guests attending church services, more disciples working in the mission field, etc.

The work of SCOLBE enables Christian ministries to raise more dollars through improved development programs and/or stewardship education programs. Strategic planning provides for a focused missionary effort. A robust volunteer management program enables a staff to engage more volunteers in the work of the Church. An enhanced communication program enables staff to reach internally and externally with the message of salvation, and a streamlined governance model frees up more disciple time to work in the mission field.

Strong ministries focus on mission work beyond the church property, while weak ministries normally focus internally. SCOLBE helps ministries strengthen their resources to raise disciples who are focused beyond the church entryway.

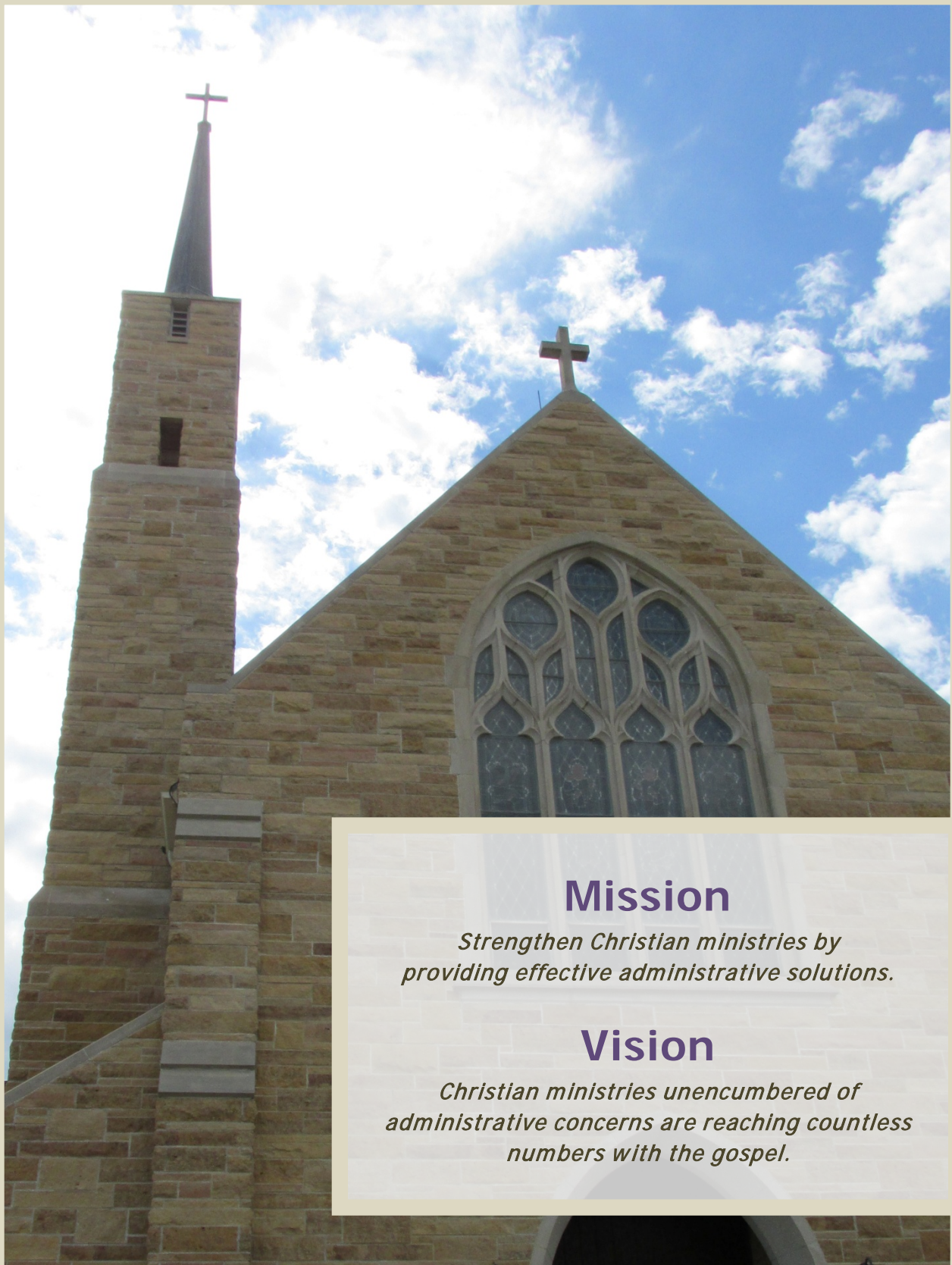
SCOLBE was created, not to duplicate or replace the resources already available to ministries, but to complement what's already available---and to add value. Our clients pay only for the services they need. That may include consultation on one topic or more extensive advice on multiple projects.

SCOLBE uses a common sense approach to providing administrative solutions. We seek to use "Best Practices" that have been tried and tested in the business community in developing administrative solutions for our clients. As a result, a strong administrative component of any ministry will free up more disciple time to work in the mission field.



*"SCOLBE's expertise is helping us go forward in a way that is focused and less expensive than some of the options we had considered. It has truly been a blessing to have the SCOLBE team's business expertise at work in our ministry. I highly recommend their services!"*

—Rev. Jim Rasmussen CEO, Concordia Lutheran Schools of Omaha



## **Mission**

*Strengthen Christian ministries by providing effective administrative solutions.*

## **Vision**

*Christian ministries unencumbered of administrative concerns are reaching countless numbers with the gospel.*

*"There's rapid, sometimes tumultuous, change happening in our world, that impacts our Church. SCOLBE offers congregations and ministries a way to gain a broader perspective on the planning and operations issues they're facing and develop practical ways to address them – from people who share their faith tradition."*

–Beth Llewellyn, Vice President, Mission Integration, Alegent Health

## The Need for SCOLBE

Too often, church and community leaders, faced with growing ministry needs, neglect their administrative functions. Without key elements – like a carefully crafted plan, guiding policies and procedures, efficiently run meetings and information systems – organizations struggle to reach their potential. That struggle can cause other problems, including inaccurate or incomplete information, poor communication, lack of written directions for volunteers, and many others.

As a result of these challenges, a group of Christian business executives saw an opportunity to connect people with business experience, expertise, knowledge and faith to the administrative needs of ministries.

## History

In the spring of 2007, a few Christian servant leaders met to consider creating a network of people willing to put their business acumen and expertise to work addressing administrative concerns of ministries, thereby enabling those ministries to more aggressively pursue their mission. After several meetings, SCOLBE – *Service Corps of Lutheran Business Executives* – was created. SCOLBE was officially launched in 2008 by incorporating, appointing a Board of Directors, and marketing eight services. SCOLBE received tax exempt status that same year.

In the fall of 2012 the Board commissioned a strategic plan to be developed for 2013 to 2015. In April 2013 the Board adopted "The Plan" and began its implementation. Actions included in "The Plan" are as follows; 1) develop a funding source(s), 2) rebuild the Board of Directors membership, 3) consider expanding client services, 4) hire an Executive Director, 5) execute a comprehensive marketing plan, 6) adopt the three "R" model (Recruit, Retain, and Recognize) for the Advisor Management Program, and 7) implement the SCOLBE "Model Office Systems."

### SCOLBE FOUNDERS

Kermit Brashear  
Doug Durbin  
Richard Hahn  
A. William Kernen  
Michele Pohlman  
Lloyd Probasco  
Al Schulz  
Bill Seim  
Rev. Russ Sommerfeld  
Delmer Toebben  
George Wachtler



**Typical SCOLBE client projects include:**

- + A congregation wishing to grow its endowment fund
- + A Christian school seeking a fundraising operations analysis to determine if it should hire a gift planning officer
- + A Lutheran ministry looking to develop a better orientation process for new board members
- + A ministry with a need to better understand financial statements in lay terms so staff can be more effective going forward
- + Two congregations, a Christian school, and two Christian organizations, each with a need to create a strategic plan on growing their ministries.
- + A ministry working to develop an effective volunteer management program that would relieve staffing cost while providing support for growing the ministry.
- + Assist a ministry in adopting "Best Practices" for managing communications, staff, and volunteers.

## The SCOLBE Business Model

### CONSULTING ON ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

SCOLBE is available to offer insight, expertise and perspective to ministries in the areas where administrative assistance is needed. SCOLBE provides a broad, deep array of consulting services, from financial matters to governance, from information technology to communications, and from risk management to strategic planning.

The leadership of SCOLBE helps Christian ministries ensure their administrative needs are met. SCOLBE Advisors are volunteers with experience. Advisors may be called on to provide consultations on a short-term project or to be a mentor to those looking for long-term business guidance.

SCOLBE respects the privacy of its clients and, at their request, will keep their work confidential. SCOLBE offers services at a much lower rate than most traditional consulting firms. Congregations and ministries purchase only the services they need.

### ADVISORS

SCOLBE advisors come from a variety of business experiences gained from their work with the construction industry, financial institutions, insurance, professional accounting and legal, resource development, etc.

SCOLBE advisors understand the administrative issues that distract from the mission of your congregation or ministry. We have listened to and worked with ministry representatives who share many of the same concerns, such as:

- + *Meeting runs over allotted time*
- + *Lack of personnel policies and job descriptions*
- + *How to develop an endowment fund*
- + *Failure to adopt policies to strengthen internal controls*
- + *Difficulty in maintaining focused volunteer program*
- + *Inability to build a ministry with a clear vision and mission*
- + *How to respond to negative PR issues*
- + *How to provide staff and volunteers with IT information*
- + *Incurring a loss because of inadequate insurance coverage*

Although the *SCOLBE* Advisors offer their time, experience and expertise at no cost, there is a financial need to keep *SCOLBE* viable. Therefore *SCOLBE* must charge the congregation or ministry for services rendered. Costs are generally between 40% and 60% of the regular costs of consultants.

## TARGET MARKET

*SCOLBE* desires to offer its services to any Christian congregation or ministry in Eastern Nebraska and Western Iowa. *SCOLBE* is sometimes asked to work with smaller congregations and ministries who find themselves in desperate need of a service but unable to pay the entire cost of the service. To accommodate such ministries, *SCOLBE* seeks funds from individuals, corporations, and foundations to assist such ministries.

*SCOLBE* believes that every ministry must have an investment in the process even though they may not be able to cover the total cost. Therefore any congregation or ministry engaged must be willing to find the funding to cover a minimum of 50% of the cost to engage *SCOLBE*.

Past projects took an average of 40 hours of Advisory time. This average includes initial "discovery" conversation, researching information provided, interviewing staff, board members and friends involved. Also included in that time is writing a final report to the congregation or ministry and follow-up consulting or mentoring to ensure the process was completed to the ministry's satisfaction. This average cost for each project was around \$3,000.

*"Our board is delighted that we're moving ahead in a planned, methodical way. In all, I couldn't be happier with the support we've received from SCOLBE. They were quick to understand who we are and see our needs. The experience I've had with them has been 100 percent positive."*

– Dave Coker, Executive Director, Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries (NLOM)



## Conclusion

It is SCOLBE's mission that Christian ministries unencumbered of administrative concerns can reach the lost With the gospel of our Lord and Savior. Thankfully there are ministries able to bear the full cost of a SCOLBE engagement. It is SCOLBE's hope that no ministry be turned away for lack of funds.

In addition to your gift, we would ask that you consider sharing name(s) of potential Christian organizations that may be in need of an administrative solution from a SCOLBE engagement.

We believe the SCOLBE concept is relevant and can be an important service of sharing "Best Practices" with any ministry. We pray you will feel the same and will support the SCOLBE ministry.



*"From the beginning, I have truly supported the concept of SCOLBE. These services aren't only for ministries that are in crisis or facing major hurdles. They are for those who simply could benefit from some additional expertise and experience. Every congregation can take a look at themselves and see where they can get some blessing from SCOLBE."*

**–Rev. Luke R. Schnake, Director of Ministries, Christ Lutheran Church of Lincoln**