



Bivocational Handbook For Congregations/Pastors “So what else could I do? Good jobs to pair with ministry”

What second vocation fits with ministry can be determined by personal preference, work style and flexibility of the second job. It is preferable that the bivocational pastor, along with the congregation, think proactively about gifting and preferred work style during the time of negotiation or candidacy, rather than “take whatever is available.” The second job should offer some opportunity for ministry by one’s presence; typically, colleagues in the second job will know you are a pastor. Some have even become the go-to pastor for the unchurched because of their second job.

There are some jobs that seem more typical for combining with a pastorate. Mennonite bivocational pastors who responded to the survey¹ reported a variety of professions as indicated on the chart below.

Professional	Business	Skilled Labor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consultant • graphic designer • temporary conference work • nonprofit program director • conference mission agency staff hospice chaplain • chaplain • working with developmentally challenged adults in work setting • professor (2) • administrator of camp and retreat center • teacher (3) • secondary special ed teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sales/bookkeeping/management, cabinet-maker • truck company manager/owner • funeral director • music instrument repair/teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-employed housing rehabilitation • self-employed home improvement • farmer (2) • school bus driver • maintenance • picture framer • forester

¹

Marianne O. Rhebergen studied the placement of part-time clergywomen in the Presbyterian Church USA, Synod of the Northwest.² She found typical accompanying jobs for women were:

- pastoral counseling
- social services
- teaching
- executive employees
- chaplains

She recommends special effort be made to place women, older candidates, part-time or handicapped candidates. Exposure of successful candidates is essential. Serving interims is a good way to gain experience. Advocates or sponsors in the system can help as well.

Steve Clapp also gives concrete examples that fit well with ministry from a Church of the Brethren study of bivocational ministers:

- social work
- educator
- clerk
- real estate
- plumber
- government work
- physician
- electrician
- business owner
- banker
- journalist
- sports coach
- computer design.³

*Diane Zaerr Brenneman
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² Rhebergen, Marianne O., *Varieties of gifts : a study of the placement of clergywomen, racial and ethnic minority ministers, clergy couples, part-time and older pastors in churches of the Synod of the Northeast, United Presbyterian Church* (Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute, 1983).

³ Steve Clapp, Ron Finney, and Angela Zimmerman, *Preaching, Planning and Plumbing* (Richmond and Fort Wayne, IN: Brethren Academy and Christian Community, 1999), 50.