

MINISTRY PLACEMENT GUIDE

Gifted & *Placed.*

A practical guide for church leaders who want to build a gift-activation culture — helping every person in your congregation move from discovery to deployment.

- How to use The Gift Profile in your church context
- All 19 gifts with ministry placement recommendations
- A 4-step framework for gift activation
- How to adapt this for any church size or tradition

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How to use this guide

This is a working document, not a manual. Read it once to understand the framework, then keep it close when you're having conversations with members about their Gift Profile results. The placement matrix on page 5 is the section you'll return to most often.

FOUNDATION

A note on *gift theology*.

Before you use this tool with your congregation, it matters that you know what kind of tool it is — and what kind it isn't. That clarity will shape every conversation you have with someone who brings you their results.

"These aren't personality categories. They're expressions of grace — charis — placed in a person by the Spirit for the building up of the body. The assessment surfaces patterns. The Spirit distributed the gift."

FORMATION LAB — THE GIFT PROFILE FRAMEWORK

What these gifts are

Spiritual gifts are χαρίσματα — grace gifts — given by the Spirit at conversion for the purpose of building up the church. They are not earned, developed, or personality-based. They are expressions of God's grace distributed through a person.

This means the assessment doesn't measure what someone is good at. It surfaces how grace is moving in them — and where it's most likely to produce fruit in community.

What these gifts aren't

The Gift Profile is not a personality assessment, a talent inventory, or a career placement test. A person's results are not a job description. They are a starting point for a pastoral conversation.

The gifts are confirmed in community over time — not determined by a single assessment. Hold results as a useful lens, not a final word.

The categories are lenses, not walls **IMPORTANT**

The three teaching categories — Communication, Revelation, and Action — describe the *source* of a gift, not its limits. A Revelation gift like Wisdom expresses itself through conversation, counsel, and decision-making. An Action gift like Mercy communicates without words. A Communication gift like Teaching produces formation in one-on-one conversations as much as from a platform.

When someone brings you their results, help them see the category as a starting point for understanding — not a box they're locked inside.

The two-tier distinction

The Gift Profile distinguishes between natural gifts (common grace, given to all people — James 1:17) and spiritual gifts (given to believers by the Spirit for the body's formation — 1 Peter 4:10). This distinction matters pastorally: someone may be naturally talented at speaking but not carry the gift of Teaching. Someone may have no natural affinity for caregiving but carry the gift of Mercy with unusual grace. The assessment is measuring the second category.

THE FRAMEWORK

How The Gift Profile works.

The assessment is built around 39 behaviorally-framed statements across four sections, with three tradition-filter questions at the start that shape how results are interpreted. Here's what the engine is doing underneath.

The three categories

Communication gifts are expressed primarily through words, language, and the transmission of truth — Teaching, Encouragement, Evangelism, Tongues, Interpretation.

Revelation gifts originate in Spirit-given perception and understanding — Wisdom, Knowledge, Prophecy, Discerning of Spirits.

Action gifts are expressed primarily through doing, giving, and relational presence — Faith, Healing, Miracles, Mercy, Giving, Leadership, Administration, Service/Helps, Pastor/Shepherd.

The stewardship posture

Every result includes a stewardship posture — where the person currently sits in their journey with their gift. Three postures:

- Faithfully Deployed — actively using the gift in community
- Recognized, Not Yet Deployed — aware of the gift but not yet activated
- In the Process of Discovery — earlier in the journey, building foundations

The posture tells you *how* to have the conversation, not just *what* to say.

The tradition filter

Before the assessment begins, respondents answer four "Before We Begin" questions that locate their theological tradition and hermeneutical instinct. This does two things:

- Results for sign gifts (tongues, interpretation, prophecy, healing, miracles) are framed in tradition-appropriate language — a cessationist receives a different description than a charismatic, without compromising the theological integrity of either.
- Every submission is tradition-tagged in your data, enabling meaningful comparison across your congregation's diversity.

What results to pay attention to

The primary gift is where the highest behavioral pattern scored. The secondary gifts often tell you more about how the primary gift operates. A person with Leadership as primary and Administration as secondary builds systems. A person with Leadership as primary and Prophecy as secondary carries vision with unusual spiritual weight. Read the constellation, not just the top result.

FULL REFERENCE

The Gift + Placement *Matrix.*

All 19 gifts with primary ministry placement recommendations. Use this as a starting point — adapt language and roles for your church's specific context and culture.

GIFT	CATEGORY	PRIMARY MINISTRY PLACEMENTS
Teaching	COMM	Preaching, small group leadership, new believer classes, discipleship, leadership development
Encouragement	COMM	Pastoral care, small groups, prayer ministry, counseling support, guest services
Evangelism	COMM	Outreach, community engagement, guest services, street ministry, church planting
Tongues	COMM	Prayer ministry, intercession, worship, contemplative environments
Interpretation	COMM	Prayer ministry, worship leadership, teaching support, prophetic community
Wisdom	REV	Elder teams, pastoral counseling, strategic planning, mentoring, crisis response
Knowledge	REV	Teaching, discipleship, counseling support, prayer ministry, leadership teams
Prophecy	REV	Elder teams, prophetic community, intercession, pastoral care, church planting
Discerning of Spirits	REV	Elder teams, pastoral care, prayer ministry, counseling support, accountability
Faith	ACTION	Prayer/intercession, church planting, outreach, leadership teams, healing ministry
Healing	ACTION	Pastoral care, prayer ministry, hospital visitation, counseling support, grief ministry
Miracles	ACTION	Prayer/intercession, healing services, evangelism, missional and pioneer contexts
Mercy	ACTION	Care ministry, hospital/prison visitation, benevolence, grief support, counseling
Giving	ACTION	Stewardship leadership, benevolence, missions, capital campaigns, donor relations
Leadership	ACTION	Pastoral leadership, elder boards, ministry directors, small group oversight, planting
Administration	ACTION	Operations, ministry coordination, event planning, financial stewardship, systems
Service / Helps	ACTION	Facilities, hospitality, children's ministry support, events — virtually every area
Pastor / Shepherd	ACTION	Pastoral care, small group oversight, discipleship, mentoring, elder teams

How to adapt this for your church

Your ministry areas may have different names or structures than the ones listed above. What matters is matching the *function*, not the label. A person with the gift of Administration doesn't need a role called "Administration" — they need a role where their instinct for systems and structure can actually shape how ministry operates. Use the descriptions as the guide, not the titles.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

The 4-Step Activation *Framework.*

The Gift Profile produces a result. What you do with that result determines whether it becomes a formation moment or just a data point. These four steps give you a repeatable process for turning assessment results into active ministry participation.

1 Receive the result together

Don't let someone sit alone with their Gift Profile. Create a moment — a conversation in a small group, a one-on-one with a pastor or ministry leader, or a structured debrief during your membership or belonging pathway. Ask: "What landed? What surprised you? What felt right?" The assessment surfaces something — your presence helps them hold it.

2 Name the stewardship posture honestly

Look at the posture result together. If they're "Recognized, Not Yet Deployed" — what's holding them back? Permission? Platform? A belief that what they have isn't enough? The posture tells you the pastoral need underneath the gift conversation. Address that before you move to placement.

3 Make a specific, low-stakes invitation

Don't move from gift result to ministry role in one step — especially for someone with a dormant posture. Start with a small, specific, reversible invitation. "Would you be willing to help with one Sunday?" is more activating than "We'd love you to join the care team." The goal is a first yes, not a life commitment. The first yes becomes the second yes.

4 Follow up within 30 days

The biggest gift activation failure in churches is the follow-up gap. A person takes an assessment, has a good conversation, receives an invitation — and then hears nothing. Thirty days later they've mentally moved on. Assign ownership: who is following up with this person? It doesn't need to be the senior pastor. It needs to be someone who will actually do it.

"Humility doesn't require you to minimize or dismiss your gifts. You've got to both acknowledge and accept them so you can use them well."

PAUL MILLER, SENIOR PASTOR OF HOPEX CHURCH

CONTEXTUAL ADAPTATION

Adapting for your *context*.

The Gift Profile was built to work across church traditions, sizes, and cultures. But every church is specific. Here's how to adapt the framework without losing its integrity.

Small churches (under 150)

In a smaller church, the placement matrix is less about departments and more about roles. Someone with Administration doesn't need an "operations team" — they may be the person who finally brings order to your Sunday morning setup or builds your volunteer communication system.

In a small church, gifts often go unrecognized because there's no formal structure to receive them. The activation conversation becomes: "Here's where I see God's grace in you — and here's a specific thing our church actually needs that you could help with."

Large churches (500+)

In a larger church, the risk is routing people too quickly into existing ministry pipelines without genuine pastoral attention. A person with Mercy gets pointed to the care team. A person with Teaching gets pointed to small group leadership. That may be right — but it may also miss something more specific.

Use the secondary gifts to create more precision in placement conversations. The combination of gifts tells you more than any single result.

Cessationist traditions

The Gift Profile is already tradition-aware. Respondents who identify with a cessationist tradition receive reframed descriptions for sign gifts that honor their conviction without dismissing the grace pattern the assessment detected.

For your congregation, you can use the placement recommendations for gifts like Faith and Discerning of Spirits with confidence — these map naturally to prayer leadership and elder accountability regardless of tradition.

Charismatic traditions

In a charismatic context, the full gift taxonomy is active — including tongues, interpretation, prophecy, healing, and miracles. The placement recommendations for these gifts assume a community context where they are expected and welcomed.

The stewardship posture layer is especially valuable here: in charismatic contexts, gifts are often acknowledged but not consistently deployed in structured, community-building ways. The posture conversation helps with that.

Using The Gift Profile in a membership or belonging pathway RECOMMENDED

The most effective context for this tool is a structured belonging or membership pathway — specifically in the session that orients someone toward active participation in the church's life. We recommend introducing The Gift Profile at the point in your pathway where someone is transitioning from "attending" to "belonging."

- Have members complete the assessment before the session and bring their results
- Use the first 15 minutes to discuss results in pairs or triads
- Have a pastor or ministry leader receive results and note patterns across the cohort
- Close with a specific, low-stakes invitation into one ministry area based on their result

THE LONG VISION

Building a gift-activation *culture*.

The goal isn't to run everyone through an assessment. The goal is to build a church culture where people know they are gifted, where gifts are seen and named in community, and where deployment is the expected next step after discovery — not an optional one.

What a gift-activation culture actually looks like

It's not a spiritual gifts class once a year. It's a set of pastoral habits that become embedded in how your community talks about itself. A few markers:

- Leaders regularly name what they see in people — "I notice how you always seem to know what someone needs before they ask. That's not just empathy. That's grace."
- Ministry invitations are gift-specific rather than need-based — not "we need volunteers" but "we need someone with your particular capacity for seeing people."
- The stewardship language becomes part of your community's vocabulary — people talk about deploying their gifts, not just having them.
- Discovery is seen as a pastoral responsibility, not a personal project — the church helps people find their gifts, not just offers tools for self-discovery.

The annual report opportunity

The Gift Profile captures tradition, gift result, stewardship posture, and church context from every respondent. Over time, this data tells you something no survey can: how the grace of God is actually distributed in your congregation — and where it's being deployed versus where it's lying dormant.

Formation Lab publishes an annual State of the Church's Gifts report drawing on aggregated data from churches using The Gift Profile. Your church's data contributes to a picture of the body of Christ that no one has ever been able to see at scale before.

What to do right now

- Share thegiftprofile.com with your congregation this Sunday
- Build it into your next membership or belonging cohort
- Ask your leadership team to complete it and debrief together
- Note which gifts are well-represented and which are rare in your context
- Identify one person per gift category who can receive, mentor, and activate others with that gift

Stay connected

This guide will be updated as The Gift Profile develops. To receive the annual State of the Church's Gifts report, updates to the placement guide, and Formation Lab resources for church leaders, visit formedbyscripture.com. For questions about using The Gift Profile in your church, reach out at hello@paulmiller.co.

Every believer is not just gifted but placed.

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