

Three Windows Three Women

Honoring our mothers

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I am the oldest daughter of an oldest daughter of an oldest daughter. Ever since I was little, I have prided myself on being a part of a line of independent, intelligent women.

I was 10 when my mom experienced a clear call to pastoral ministry. While preaching one Sunday at our church in San Antonio about Samuel's call to ministry she heard her own sermon words about responding to God's call reflected back to her. So, our family picked up and moved to Elkhart, Indiana, where Mom attended seminary for three years and then entered the pastorate.

My mom's journey to the ministry came at a very formative time in my own growth. I was so impressed by my mom's call. I saw her as a brave trailblazer, and although I certainly didn't enjoy the move and my mom and I had our own share of struggles and spats as I moved into the pre-teen phase, I idealized her new role as pastor. For a long time, I secretly harbored the thought that I, too, was probably called to be a pastor. In many ways, I internalized my mom's call as my own and it seemed that the best way I could honor my mother would be to become a pastor, too.

This changed for me in college. During my time at Bluffton, I was accepted into the *Pathways to Ministry* program. For a year, I met twice a month with other sophomores who were exploring a call to pastoral ministry. Pastors who were visiting campus had conversations with us about vocational call and experience. During these conversations, I realized something that may seem obvious, but felt revolutionary to me: ministry can happen in many different settings, and you don't have to be a pastor to serve the church.

I currently work for a church agency that lets me use my gifts of communication and extrovertedness for ministry in unconventional ways. As I work, I like to think that I'm still honoring my mother's legacy of service and ministry, just with my own, unique flavor. 📌

