

## ConnectNow Ministry Scheduler Released

Ann Arbor, Mich. — August 5, 2011 — ParishSOFT announced today that its fully browser-based ConnectNow Ministry Scheduler product is now available.

The **only** product on the market that integrates directly with the ParishSOFT family suite.

Scheduling is fast—about 20 seconds to schedule six months of liturgies

Members can log in to manage their entire, personal volunteer experience online using the My Own Church parishioner portal.

Ministry Scheduler, the **only** product on the market that integrates directly with the ParishSOFT family suite, gives parish staff the tools they need

to organize any service, special event, or ministry and recruit and schedule all volunteers. Once parish volunteers are designated as available to serve in the system, scheduling is fast—about 20 seconds to schedule six months of liturgies. And full integration means that for ParishSOFT users, Ministry Scheduler works dynamically with the family and member records that are already in your database. No additional import or export process or duplicate data entry is required.



When used with the ConnectNow My Own Church parishioner portal, members can log in securely to the Ministry Scheduler system to manage their entire, personal volunteer experiences online. While online, members can check schedules and set preferences for themselves and their families, ranging from the simple (e.g., I'm on vacation this Sunday) to the complex (e.g., schedule my wife and me so that one of us can stay seated with the children during mass). The system tracks all of the variables that affect who can serve when and then uses that information to create fair, balanced schedules automatically for any event and date range.

The ability to let parishioners interact with their parish's ministry opportunities on the Web makes Ministry Scheduler a powerful recruiting tool for churches looking to grow participation and engage their members in new roles. And with smartphone usage expected to grow from 67 million in 2010 to 95 million in 2011 ([Gartner, Inc.](#)), Ministry Scheduler and the My Own Church parishioner portal are providing the anytime, anywhere tools that churches and members need to keep in touch and do the work of the Church in an age when millions of Christians, from pre-teens to seniors, are increasingly holding the Internet, and now their parishes, in the palms of their hands.

"Our users and focus groups told us exactly what they needed Ministry Scheduler to do," said product manager Ted Zettel, "and we're pleased to deliver a robust program that tames all the complexities of volunteer management and scheduling for parish staff."

Because all ministry signups can be handled in the Web-based program, the need for paper signup boards and forms can be significantly reduced or eliminated altogether. Parishes can now offer online signups from Web-connected devices placed where signup boards used to be.

Whether members access the system from their personal devices or from a laptop in the parish gathering space, their interest and availability to serve goes directly into the system and is flagged for authorized

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ministry coordinators. This marks a much needed upgrade to paper ministry signup processes, where each line item of volunteer interest requires an extra step of data entry into the parish software for proper tracking and follow up.

According to Zettel, many parishes reported hearing from members who had used a paper form to volunteer for a ministry but were never contacted about the next step required to serve. “It’s not that staff weren’t doing their jobs,” explained Zettel, “but a paper process is simply prone to lost forms, inaccurate data entry, and ultimately, underserved ministries. When a member raises his hand to serve in the Ministry Scheduler system, we can be sure he’s invited to take the next step.”

Ministry Scheduler will gradually replace the desktop module Time & Talent, the company’s original volunteer tracking and scheduling program, which was launched in 1998 as part of the Parish family suite of modules. Nearly 2,000 parishes that have the Time & Talent program may now upgrade for the new Ministry Scheduler program at no additional license fee.

To learn more, please visit [www.parishsoft.com/ministryscheduler](http://www.parishsoft.com/ministryscheduler) for product information, an introductory video, and links to register for our free Ministry Scheduler webinar, which includes a demonstration of the product.

#### **About ParishSOFT**

Founded in 1998, ParishSOFT offers a complete suite of church and diocesan management software to connect people and the church and to reduce administrative work. The Ministry Scheduler program is the latest in the company’s ConnectNow series of fully browser-based products that offer secure anytime, anywhere access to parish data. ParishSOFT continually invests in improving its software and Web solutions, as well as adding new features and products. ParishSOFT presently serves more than 5,200 parishes and 52 arch/dioceses. Visit [www.parishsoft.com](http://www.parishsoft.com) for more information about ParishSOFT’s products and services.

Visit [www.parishsoft.com](http://www.parishsoft.com) for more information about ParishSOFT’s products, services, and its annual [Users’ Conference](#) for parish and diocesan staff.

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