

Glossary of Terms

What we mean when we say...

The Faith & Work ecosystem is diverse and there are many terms and phrases that can be understood in different ways, or used differently by various individuals, groups, or organizations. So, we thought it would be helpful to share what we mean when we say certain words or phrases.

- **Work**

When we talk about work, we refer to any time we use our hands, minds, or both in service of others, whether paid or unpaid. This includes a variety of activities, from professional tasks to acts of service and caregiving. Work brings personal fulfillment while also benefiting our communities. Work can become a way to honour God, reflect his image, and participate in his greater mission in the world.

- **Worker**

When we talk about workers, we refer to anyone who engages in labour or service to fulfill God's purpose and contribute to creation's flourishing. This includes not just paid employment but also acts of service, caregiving, and daily tasks that reflect God's command to steward the world. Work is meaningful when done with integrity, skill, and dedication, honouring God and serving others.

- **Workplace**

When we talk about the workplace, we refer to any environment where people engage in work or employment-related activities. This includes physical spaces like offices, factories, or stores, as well as virtual spaces for remote work. The workplace is where tasks are performed, roles are carried out, and individuals contribute to organizational goals, often in collaboration with others.

- **Vocation**

When we talk about vocation (Latin *vocatio* meaning a calling), we are referring to 'calling' as layered and interconnected. At the core is the call to follow Jesus, then to join in God's redemptive work, followed by loving our neighbors, and finally, living these out through our specific jobs, roles and work.

- **Occupation**

When we talk about occupation, we are referring to a specific job or profession. An occupation or profession is the specific kind of work or job a person does, especially as a means of earning a living. It's typically more specific and task-oriented than broader terms like "vocation" or "career."

- **Marketplace**

When we talk about the marketplace we are referring broadly to any area of life where human creativity, energy, and exchange take place — not just business, but also roles like homemaking, pastoring, teaching, the arts, and even everyday tasks like garbage collection.

- **Discipleship**

When we talk about discipleship, we refer to the process of learning to live according to the teachings and example of Jesus, much like an apprentice learning a trade under a master. Discipleship is not just about acquiring knowledge but about embodying Christ's values, character, and actions in everyday life. It involves personal transformation through relationship with Jesus, with the goal of growing in faith and becoming more like him in word and deed.

- **Whole-Life Discipleship**

When we use this term, we are not trying to suggest different levels of discipleship. We are simply emphasizing that true discipleship encompasses our whole lives. Whole-life discipleship rejects the sacred/secular divide and affirms that following Jesus is a lifelong journey touching every part of who we are, what we do, and how we live within God's creation. It calls us to reflect Christ in every sphere of life — relationships, work, rest, and care for the world.

- **Liturgy**

When we talk about liturgy, we refer to the prescribed practices for corporate worship, including prayers, calls to worship, readings, litanies, sacraments, and benedictions. These elements guide the congregation in worship and spiritual reflection. For us, liturgy should

not only serve as a reflection of faith but also connect to the working lives of people, integrating the sacred with daily work and helping to shape how we live out our faith throughout the week.

- **Sacred**

When we talk about sacred, we are not using it as it is traditionally defined in Christian theology. Sacred typically refers to things that are considered holy or set apart for religious purposes and is often contrasted with the secular. A holistic view sees all work and life as meaningful and aligned with spiritual values, blurring the traditional divide between the sacred and the secular.

- **Secular**

When we talk about secular, we are usually pushing against its traditional use where the term is often used to describe non-religious work. This use creates a divide between sacred and secular spheres. This divide can diminish the spiritual value of everyday work, overlooking its potential to reflect God's purposes.

- **Dualism**

When we talk about dualism, we are usually referring to sacred/secular dualism, which is the belief or concept that reality is made up of two distinct and often opposing elements. It suggests a separation between these elements, often implying that one is superior or more important than the other.

- **Church**

When we talk about the church, we refer to it as a gathering and sending community. The church has a dual role: gathering believers for worship, fellowship, and teaching, and sending them out to share the gospel through word and deed. This emphasizes the balance between communal worship and active participation in God's work beyond the church walls.

- **Worship**

When we talk about worship, we refer to a seamless life, as understood by the Hebrew people, where "work" or "service" is part of worship. In the biblical context, the Hebrew word *avodah* includes not only corporate worship but also serving God through all aspects of life—work, daily tasks, and interactions with others. This highlights that worship is not limited to liturgy but extends to every act of life, honouring and serving God in all things.

- **Sunday to Monday Gap**

When we talk about the Sunday to Monday gap, we are referring to the disconnect between the spiritual life experienced on Sundays and the routine of work or daily responsibilities starting on Monday, highlighting the challenge of integrating faith with everyday life.