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## Firm lawyer says membership in a faith-based group helps her practice

By Jerry Crimmins  
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Chicago lawyer Amy J. Parrish has been a member of the Christian Legal Society for almost 10 years, since law school, and says it helped her faith and her practice.

Parrish, 31, attended Valparaiso University School of Law, a college she said that has a Lutheran orientation.

She joined the Christian Legal Society in her first year of law school. "It helped me figure out how I wanted to integrate my faith and my practice when I got out of law school," she said.

"I think it helped direct my career path as well."

In school, one of her internships was with the Alliance Defense Fund, a Christian organization.

When she was looking for a lawyer position, she found that the Chicago firm of Mauck & Baker LLC had an opening for a new lawyer. She recalled this week that she may have seen that ad on the website of the Christian Legal Society.

Parrish said she discovered that all the lawyers at Mauck & Baker were members of the Christian Legal Society just as she was. She was eventually hired and has now been there more than six years.

She said she works on religious liberties litigation and she and the firm "represent churches and nonprofits in all the aspects of their religious ministries and their nonprofit purposes."

A lot of the cases she and the firm work on



Amy J. Parrish

are religious civil rights cases on a contingency fee basis. She said under Section 1988 of the U.S. Code, the firm's fees are paid by the losing side only if Parrish's firm wins.

Asked if this was a risky way to make a living, Parrish said, "It is. But we find that God always provides."

The firm also does nonreligious work for nonprofits as well as estate planning, real estate work and some business law.

Parrish is married to a minister, the Rev. David Parrish. They have two children, Ella, age 2, and Gabe, 9 months.

Parrish said she now works part time and bills 600 hours a year at her firm instead of her former 1,200 hours.