



# Supporting Volunteers

Office for Church Life and Leadership

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## Definitions and Introduction

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**Ministry** All activities motivated by our faith in Christ are ministry. This is the definition used throughout this booklet and in *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*.

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**Volunteer** A person who does a task without financial compensation or without being forced to do it is a volunteer.

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**Volunteer Ministry** The ministry of Christians, the ministry of church members, is primarily the ministry of volunteers.

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**Volunteer Ministry Program** A church's intentional, planned work with its volunteers is its volunteer ministry program.

A church's volunteer ministry program, as described in *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*, consists of the following ingredients or components.

- Developing a mission statement
- Preparing volunteer ministry position descriptions
- Identifying volunteers
- Matching volunteers and ministry positions
- Recruiting volunteers
- Training volunteers
- Supporting volunteers
- Completing volunteer ministries
- Evaluating the volunteer ministry program

These components are explained in a condensed form in "The Church and Its Volunteers." For more extensive information about each component of a volunteer ministry program, order the appropriate booklet as indicated on the inside back cover.

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## This Booklet

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This booklet is one of seven which together compose *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*.

This booklet is written to guide the work of a group of persons in the church who have responsibility, or are given responsibility, for organizing and overseeing the church's efforts to provide support and assistance to its members who are engaged in volunteer ministries.

This booklet can be used as a self-contained resource by a group in the church even if there is no effort being made to develop an organized volunteer ministry program. If this is the case, it is recommended that the leader of the task group working on support secure and become familiar with some of the other booklets in this series.

Ideally, this booklet will be used by a group in the church that is part of an organized volunteer ministry program. Such a program will be giving attention to all or most of the components identified above.

The booklet in this series entitled "Guiding the Church's Volunteer Ministry Program" provides guidance for organizing a comprehensive volunteer ministry program. If the system described there is adopted by the church, then this booklet becomes a primary resource for the Task Force on Support and Completion.

# Supporting Volunteers

Volunteerism Resource Center  
at ENERGIZE ASSOCIATES  
5450 Wissahickon Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19144



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***Supporting Volunteers***, a booklet in the series,  
***The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches***

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One of the major elements in a church's volunteer ministry program is the support provided its members as they engage in volunteer ministries. Such support needs to be planned in order for the church to communicate to its

members who carry out volunteer ministries "We really care about you and what you do." A supportive climate within the church helps release power and energy for the church's mission.

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### **Suggestions for Use**

This booklet on supporting volunteers is intended for use by a small group of persons who are given responsibility for planning ways in which the whole church can be intentional about supporting its volunteers. This group will be referred to throughout this booklet as the task group working on support. Some churches may want to establish a special group for this task. Others may want to assign the responsibility to an established group such as the deacons, elders or nominating committee.

A leader or chairperson of the group will be responsible for guiding the work of the task group and for coordinating its work with other groups dealing with

components of the church's volunteer ministry program.

It is important that those who are working on the church's support of volunteers be aware of what others are doing in the church's volunteer ministry program. A brief introduction to a complete volunteer ministry program can be found in the booklet "The Church and Its Volunteers," which is part of *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*. It is recommended that all members of the task group working on support have a copy of that booklet or have an opportunity to read a copy at some time early in their work.

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### **What This Booklet Contains**

This booklet is a guide for the task group working on support. It is divided into three sections:

Section One presents a biblical and theological perspective on volunteer ministry.

Section Two outlines a series of principles which provide a foundation for the work of the task group on support.

Section Three outlines a series of meetings for the task group and identifies some resources to be used in the work of the task group.

The procedures outlined in the booklet are *suggested*. While they have been tested and found to be helpful in some churches, they cannot be used in the same way in every church. Each church is encouraged to adapt and alter the procedures so they are comfortable and compatible with the way things are done in your church. However, do not hesitate to attempt some new approaches simply because they have never been tried before in your church.

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### **Related Resources**

Three quite different approaches churches can take in a volunteer ministry program are described in Section IV of "Guiding the Church's Volunteer Ministry Program," a booklet in this series. That section, "Three Experiences with the Volunteer Ministry Program," provides background information and, it

is hoped will spark your own creativity in working on support. This booklet and all others in the series *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches* may be ordered from Church Leadership Resources, P.O. Box 179, St. Louis, Missouri 63166. See the list of booklets on the inside back cover.

# Section One: A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry

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*The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches* is written by church people for church people. The booklets in this series attempt to articulate in simple terms an interpretation of what

God intends the church to be and do. This section contains a summary of some fundamental affirmations which undergird the principles and procedures outlined in the guidebook.

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All people are created and sustained in the mystery and power of God. God has a dream for us and works patiently and persistently to bring that dream to fulfillment. Through the centuries, people have perceived God's working uniquely in their time and have expressed their faith in the presence and power of God in their lives in ways uniquely meaningful to them. And yet, we are drawn together by our conviction that God's intention for a world of peace, justice, freedom and love has not wavered.

Our understanding of God has become clearer in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We can say that to know Jesus is to know God. Moreover, God's love which was expressed so

completely in and through Jesus, changes us and leads us, as disciples, to witness and work for the fulfillment of God's dream—the coming of God's reign.

The church is entrusted with Christ's ministry in the world and is empowered by his loving Spirit. Each one of us—every man, woman and child who bears the mark of baptism—shares in this ministry. Ministry is not limited to the ordained clergy, but is given to all of us who call ourselves Christians.

The mission of the church is the mission of Jesus Christ—to witness to the living power and presence of God, to offer healing and hope in the world, to love people and to join God in the movement toward God's reign.

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## **The Mission of the Church**

One way we express our conviction that the mission of Christ is now the mission of the church is through the image of the church as the Body of Christ. This image is rich in revealing the meaning of our life together.

Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single

unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ. In this one Spirit we were all baptized, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink.

*1 Corinthians 12:12-13*  
*The Jerusalem Bible*

## **The Church as the Body of Christ**

**Body of Christ  
(continued)**

Each part in the human body contributes to and is sustained by the whole body, and so it is in the church envisioned as the Body of Christ. Christ is the head and we are members of the body. Each person is unique and precious and has a worthy ministry to perform. Christ's Spirit, working in and through us, draws the strengths of our ministries into mutual support and common purpose.

...[Christ] appointed some to be apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, others to be pastors and teachers. He did this to prepare all God's people for the work of Christian service, to build up the body of Christ.

*Ephesians 4:11-12  
Today's English Version*

**The Gifts of  
the Spirit  
for Mission**

God has not only empowered the church with the Spirit of Christ but has endowed it with the resources it needs to carry out its mission in every time and place. God's graciousness and initiative with us are seen in the gifts given to us—the talents, abilities, skills, knowledge, temperament and attitudes—which enable us to respond with faithfulness to the mission we have been given.

As the church discerns the gifts which have been placed within it and begins to apply them to its mission, it is responding faithfully. Persons need to discern and affirm the gifts they have been given and offer them to the church's mission. Some gifts seem to be simply inherent in a person. Others are developed through study, training, experience and discipline. Every person possesses gifts of ministry.

Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he [or she] has received from God.

*1 Peter 4:10  
Today's English Version*

The church, also, needs to discern and affirm the gifts of its members and apply them to its mission. Each church discovers the uniqueness of its mission as it discovers the gifts within its members.

Where needed gifts are not apparent, the church will challenge the potential in persons and find ways to inspire and support them in securing the training or experience needed that their gifts might blossom and grow. The most faithful response to Christ's Spirit is when the church becomes a sensitive and creative steward of the gifts of ministry.

The term *ministry* comes from the idea expressed by the Greek word *diakonos* meaning *one who serves*. In this fundamental way, all who serve in the name of Christ—those who are ordained and those who are not—share the Christian ministry together. Distinctions between the ordained and unordained have to do with mutually determined functions, not with more or less important ministries.

Every moment of our lives provides opportunities for ministry. All the many facets of our lives—our work, family life, leisure, public service—need to be seen in relation to ministry. We sustain and support one another in these ministries. Likewise, what we do in the life of the church should be experienced and affirmed as meaningful ministry. We should enable one another to appreciate the varieties of ministries being done in our midst. We are called, nurtured and sometimes remarkably transformed as we join our gifts with others in the Body of Christ to bear Christ's own ministry in the world.



Covenant is a theme which pervades all the Bible and expresses the church's understanding of its relationship with God. Our faithful ancestors in the Old Testament believed God selected them for special responsibility in relation to God's mission. They believed that the presence and will of God had been revealed to them in a special way and that they had a special responsibility and relationship with God. The relationship was one in which God promised sustenance and power in expectation of their faithfulness and obedience. This relationship was a covenant relationship.

The church continues in a renewed covenant relationship with God. This covenant relationship is characterized by the gift of Christ's Spirit to the church and the gift of faith to its members.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called

you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were no people but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy.

*1 Peter 2:9-10*

*Revised Standard Version*

### **Covenanting Together In Mission**

Through our commitment of membership in the church we not only bind ourselves in covenant with God, but with those who have made the commitment of membership with us. To be a covenant community suggests a group of persons are bound by vows of loyalty to one another; care for, serve and minister to one another; stand beside and support one another through the experiences of life. When we are in covenant we form a visible and concrete expression of the Body of Christ in a specific location and time. It is our covenant with God and one another which keeps us together and provides us with energy for mission.

Christ's ministry is now our ministry, for we are the Body of Christ. As the Body of Christ we are sustained by his Spirit and given the gifts for ministry. As we discern, affirm, offer and apply our gifts to the church's mission we respond faithfully.

All of us who call ourselves Christians are called to bear Christ's own ministry in our homes, jobs, community service and church. Persons like ourselves, with all our strengths and frailties, are chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God and to witness to a world of peace, justice, freedom and love which God intends and is bringing into being.

### **Summary**

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# Section Two: Principles Underlying the Support of Volunteers

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Lawrence J. Kramer, Jr.,<sup>1</sup> has said, "Volunteers are not free!" This is an important insight for the leaders in the volunteer ministry program. It is true that volunteers do not expect to be paid in money for their efforts. It is also true that volunteers genuinely want to contribute something of themselves through their volunteer ministries. It is true, however, that volunteers expect, need and have a right to receive many other forms of compensation: a sense of doing something important and making a difference, companionship with others, new knowledge and experience.

A review of what motivates persons and the list of reasons people volunteer provide clues about how the church needs to support its members in ministry. A variety of ways to support volunteers follow.

- Be clear about what the volunteer is to do. This is why so much attention is given to the volunteer ministry position descriptions in the volunteer ministry program outlined in *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*. Precisely describing each position prevents volunteers from floundering around, not knowing what is expected or how to go about the ministry.
- Prepare the person to be effective in his or her volunteer ministry by providing adequate orientation and training. Persons who feel they are not making an adequate or significant contribution because they are ill-equipped or poorly-prepared feel bad about themselves and limit the church's efforts as well. Keep the volunteer informed about opportunities for training and continuing education.
- Provide a person for the volunteer to relate to on an ongoing basis. This person is one to whom the volunteer can turn with questions or problems. This person seeks out the volunteer occasionally to check on "how it's going" and to offer encouragement and thanks.
- Recognize the contribution the volunteer makes. There are dozens of ways to call the church's attention to the members engaged in ministry. Develop a plan to insure that during the year every volunteer is recognized and honored for his or her efforts.
- Provide adequate resources needed by the volunteer to do the ministry. For example, a church school teacher should have access to the materials, books and supplies called for in the curriculum. A task committee should have an adequate budget to undertake programs it desires to develop.
- Reimburse the volunteer for any expenses incurred in doing the ministry. This will include costs for travel, if required; telephone charges; supplies; child care, if necessary.

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<sup>1</sup>Lawrence J. Kramer, "Recruiting Volunteers," *The Christian Ministry* 4 (May 1973): 27.

- Help the volunteer feel included. Keep the volunteer informed about news of the church, plans being made, persons with whom they work. Provide opportunities for them to influence what is happening, to give their ideas and suggestions.
- Explore with the volunteer ways to increase responsibility, expand the ministry or seek new ministry opportunities.
- Keep good records of all volunteers' work and be prepared to provide a recommendation for a volunteer who is seeking employment or another volunteer ministry.
- Continue to emphasize and make connections between faith commitments, membership in the church and volunteer ministries beyond the church. Recognize these ministries, call them to the attention of the church and honor the volunteers for their contributions in the wider church and the community. Express to them the church's gratitude for the ways in which they extend the ministry of the church into all settings where they are ministering.

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# Section Three: Procedures for Supporting Volunteers

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This section on procedures is a guide to the group responsible for planning and overseeing the church's intentional efforts to support its volunteers. This group will be referred to as the task group on support. Careful thought should be given in deciding who should serve on this task group and how they should be recruited.

The booklet in this series, "Guiding the Church's Volunteer Ministry Program," describes a comprehensive system for a total volunteer ministry program which is led by a team and four task forces, including a Task Force on Support and Completion. This section on procedures does not assume the team and task force plan is being used. However, the church which uses that plan or an adaptation of it will find that the procedures outlined in this section may be used easily by the Task Force on Support and Completion. The sample volunteer ministry position description for a task force member contained in "Guiding the Church's Volunteer Ministry Program" may be particularly helpful as you begin work on this section.

The materials in this section are designed primarily for a church beginning a volunteer ministry program and

provide a procedure for supporting everyone in the church who is engaged in volunteer ministry. Once the volunteer ministry program is operational, the materials in this section can be used to review and to keep the support effort vital and sensitive to changing needs.

A person needs to be designated as leader or chairperson of the task group. This person should become familiar with all the materials in this booklet and have a broad understanding of all the components in the volunteer ministry program and the place of support in that program. This leader should have a clear understanding of the meaning of *volunteer ministry* as used in this booklet and should consult with the pastor or another resource person (e.g., conference staff person) if questions arise which cannot be resolved.

At several points the task group members need copies of a portion of this booklet. You may choose to provide a copy of the booklet for each member rather than to make copies of portions of it.

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## Planning and Leading Meetings

Suggestions for planning and leading task group meetings:

1. Study the list of materials needed for each meeting and make provision for all supplies and resources.

2. Begin and end the meetings promptly at the announced time.
3. Provide brief group building activities at the beginning of the meetings and a time for reflection and sharing about the meeting at the end.
4. Continually look for ways to relate the work of the task group to ministry using the principles of the volunteer ministry program.
5. Provide a break for each hour or hour and a half of the meeting.
6. At the beginning of each meeting always share the objectives for the meeting and preview the agenda. (It is good practice to outline these on newsprint.)
7. At the end of each meeting, summarize accomplishments, review assignments to be done between meetings and preview the next meeting.
8. Each meeting plan has suggested times stated for each step. It is important to maintain the pace of the meeting to complete the agenda in the agreed-upon time. The task group chairperson should keep in mind that the meeting plans are flexible and feel free to make the needed changes. However, it should be noted that the meetings build on one another, and tasks not undertaken or completed may affect later plans and the work of task groups dealing with other aspects of the church's volunteer ministry program.
9. The size of the task group affects how the group works together. If the task group is only 4-6, then all group work can be done together. If there are more than four members, some group assignments could be done in sub-groups. For example, the personal sharing in each meeting plan could be done in small groups of 2-3 persons.

## Activities Outlined in This Section

*This section contains detailed instructions for the following activities to be carried out by the task group working on supporting volunteers.*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
First Meeting of the Task Group*	1 1/4 hours	Orient the task group to its work
Second Meeting of the Task Group	2 hours	Increase understanding of support for volunteers, identify how it is being done and plan new support strategies
Third Meeting of the Task Group	2 hours	Identify positions and persons needing support and plan ways to meet these needs
Meeting for Supporting Persons in Volunteer Ministries within and beyond the Local Church (to be used with various groups)	2 hours	Express support for persons in volunteer ministries

\*This meeting will be omitted if an orientation for task force members has been held as outlined in "Guiding the Church's Volunteer Ministry Program," a booklet in this series.

## First Meeting of the Task Group Working on Supporting Volunteers

### Background and Preparation

This is the first meeting of the task group selected to work on supporting volunteers in the church. Its purpose is to orient the task group to its task. If the church is using the plan described in the booklet in this series, "Guiding the Church's Volunteer Ministry Program," the chairperson of the Task Force on Support and Completion will use portions of this meeting plan during the orientation meeting for all the task forces. This meeting is then omitted.

One member of the group (chairperson) should be selected to plan and lead this meeting. This person should have a

clear understanding of the church's volunteer ministry program and what will be expected of this task group. He or she should be prepared to explain terms related to the volunteer ministry program.

If other groups in the church are working on other parts of the volunteer ministry program (e.g., volunteer ministry position descriptions, recruitment or training), the chairperson should be familiar with these plans and be prepared to tell the task group about their activities.

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### Objectives of the Meeting

Members of the task group will understand the concept of *volunteer ministry* and what it means for their church.

Members of the task group will understand their responsibilities and become familiar with resources available to them.

Members of the task group will understand what is meant by *support for volunteers*, how it is being done in the church and how well it is being done.

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### Materials Needed

- A copy of the booklet in this series "The Church and Its Volunteers" for the leader (optional)
- A copy of the components of the volunteer ministry program (from the inside front cover of this booklet) for each member of the task group or the information written on newsprint
- Paper and pencil for members of the task group
- Newsprint, markers and masking tape

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**Time Required** 1¾ hours

- Welcome, objectives, agenda
- Personal sharing and theological reflection
- Introduction to the volunteer ministry program and its components
- Definition of the meaning of support for volunteers in the church

- Sharing of feelings about how well volunteers are supported in the church
- Introduction to the work of the task group and scheduling of activities
- Worship and closing

### Overview of the Meeting

## 1

The chairperson welcomes members of the task group to the meeting,

expresses appreciation for their attendance, shares the objectives of the meeting and previews the agenda. (5 minutes)

### Detailed Outline of the Meeting

## 2

Each person is asked to reflect on the following question:

What gives you the most satisfaction in your present volunteer work in the church?

If the group is less than 4-6 persons, each person shares a response to the question. If the group is more than 4-6 persons, divide into small groups for this sharing. (15 minutes)

## 3

The chairperson leads the group in a discussion of volunteer work as ministry, first inviting the members to share how they feel their own volunteer work is ministry and then sharing the definitions of *ministry* and *volunteer ministry* found in the introduction to the booklet

in this series "The Church and Its Volunteers" and on the inside front cover of this booklet.

The chairperson may also incorporate materials from the first section of this booklet, "A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry." The discussion should refer to ministry in the local church, the wider church and the community. (15 minutes)

## 4

The chairperson introduces the volunteer ministry program as a way to enable a church to be more caring and supportive of all members engaged in ministry.

The chairperson introduces the components of a volunteer ministry program, referring to the outline found on the inside front cover of this booklet.

Copies may be prepared for handing out, or the outline may be placed on newsprint.

The chairperson tells of work that any other task group may be doing or planning related to any of the components.

The chairperson interprets the task of this task group which is to be responsible for the support of volunteers. (15 minutes)

## First Meeting

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### 5

The chairperson introduces the concept, *Volunteers are not free*, writes it on newsprint and engages the group in a discussion exploring its meaning.

The chairperson writes the following on newsprint and invites the task group to call out responses:

Members of our church who are volunteers experience support from the church in the following ways...  
(15 minutes)

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### 6

Each task group member writes a one-sentence definition of the meaning

of "support for church volunteers."  
Each person shares his or her response.  
The group creates its own definition.  
(10 minutes)

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### 7

Members of the task group discuss their overall feelings about how well the church supports its volunteers.  
(10 minutes)

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### 8

The chairperson outlines the activities and meetings of the task group (page

11) on newsprint and reviews what is involved in each step. The task group schedules its next meeting. (10 minutes)

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### 9

The chairperson or pastor leads a worship experience which provides an opportunity for the group members to affirm their activities in the church and beyond as ministry, to renew

their commitment to that ministry and to express their support for one another.

The chairperson thanks the task group members for their attendance and participation in the meeting.  
(10 minutes)



## Second Meeting of the Task Group Working on Supporting Volunteers

Orientation for task group members has occurred which has introduced the concepts of *ministry* and *volunteer ministry* and has developed a definition of support for volunteers.

The task group chairperson or other designated leader plans and leads this meeting. He or she should be prepared to share information from the first two sections of this booklet if those materials are not available for all participants.

If the church has a mission statement (statement of purpose or covenant), it is used in Step 2. For more information about developing a mission statement see "Developing a Mission Statement," a booklet in *The Ministry of Volunteers*:

*A Guidebook for Churches*. If a group within your church has been working on a mission statement as part of the volunteer ministry program, the new statement should be used.

In Step 4, a list of volunteer ministry positions in the local church and those positions which church members hold in the wider church and in the community is to be used. If another group in the church has been working on developing volunteer ministry position descriptions, it should have such a list. The chairperson should secure the list prior to this meeting. For more information about volunteer ministry positions see Part II of the booklet in this series, "Volunteers and Volunteer Ministries."

### Background and Preparation

The task group members will deepen their understanding of the mission of the church and of support for volunteers.

The members will understand ways to provide support for volunteers.

The task group will begin to develop a list of ways support is provided in the

church and make plans for securing additional information about support for volunteers.

The task group will plan additional ways to offer support to volunteers in the church.

### Objectives of the Meeting

- A copy of the church's mission statement (statement of purpose), if available, on newsprint
- A copy of "Section Two: Principles Underlying the Support of Volunteers" for each member of the task group (pages 8-9)
- The definition of support which the task group developed at its first meeting, displayed on newsprint
- A list of volunteer ministry positions within the local church and those

held by church members in the wider church and community, if such a list exists

- A copy of "Ways to Support and Recognize Volunteers" (pages 23-24) for each member of the task group or the information displayed on newsprint (also used at next meeting)
- Newsprint, markers and masking tape
- Bible for the leader

### Materials Needed

# Second Meeting

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**Time Required** 2 hours

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## Overview of the Meeting

- Welcome, objectives, agenda
  - Theological reflection and prayer
  - Reflection on principles and definition of support for volunteers
  - Identification of how support is currently being given and what additional information is needed
  - Study of ways to support and recognize volunteers
  - Plans for new or additional ways to support volunteers
  - Reflection on the meeting and closure
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## Detailed Outline of the Meeting

### 1

The task group chairperson welcomes the members, briefly reviews the first

meeting of the task group, shares the objectives for this meeting and previews the agenda. (5 minutes)

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### 2

The chairperson shares ideas from “The Mission of the Church” in the first section of this booklet, “A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry” and encourages discussion.

If there is a mission statement (statement of purpose or covenant) of the

church on newsprint, the group shares similarities between the mission statement and the presentation and discussion on the mission of the church.

The chairperson reads Ephesians 4:11-16 and prays for the Body of Christ and all who are members. (15 minutes)

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### 3

Copies of “Principles Underlying the Support of Volunteers,” the second section of this booklet, are distributed. If these are not available, the chairperson or other designated leader makes a brief presentation of the principles. The group discusses the principles until

there is relative clarity about them.

The chairperson posts the definition of support which the task group created at its first meeting. The group decides whether they can affirm the definition as written or need to revise the definition in light of their discussion of principles. (15 minutes)

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### 4

A list of volunteer ministry positions within the church and those held by church members in the wider church and community is posted and reviewed by the chairperson.

If the list is not available, the chairper-

son labels newsprint with areas of volunteer ministry as follows: “In the Local Church,” “In the Wider Church” and “In the Community”.

The task group identifies as many volunteer ministries held by members of the church in each category as it can. (10 minutes)

## 5

The task group develops a chart of support using the list of volunteer ministry positions. The chart should include the following categories:

Ministry Position	Type of Support Being Given	Who Provides the Support	Additional Information Needed
<i>Mission Coordinator</i>	<i>Budget, Conference, Training, Journals</i>	<i>pastor, Council chairperson</i>	
<i>Music Coordinator</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>pastor, choir director</i>	<i>any orientation?</i>
<i>Greeter</i>		<i>seasons</i>	<i>find out what support they need</i>

After identifying the information for as many positions as possible, the task group plans how to secure the additional information needed before the

next meeting. This will include securing copies of volunteer ministry position descriptions, if they are available. Assignments are made. (25 minutes)

## 6

Each task group member is given a copy of "Ways to Support and Recog-

nize Volunteers." If copies are not available, this information is listed on newsprint. These are read and discussed for clarification. (10 minutes)

## 7

The task group discusses one or two of these additional ways to support volun-

teers in the church and makes plans for providing support. Assignments are made for task group members to follow through on the plans. (20 minutes)

## 8

The task group chairperson reviews the accomplishments at the meeting and

previews the next task group meeting. Assignments of task group members are reviewed. The task group schedules its next meeting. (10 minutes)

## 9

Task group members reflect on and share their feelings about the meeting. The chairperson reflects with the group on the meaning of ministry and invites

all to describe how they understand the work of this task group to be ministry. The chairperson reads I Corinthians 1:4-9 and closes the meeting with prayer. (10 minutes)

## Third Meeting of the Task Group Working on Supporting Volunteers

### Background and Preparation

The task group members should have completed their assignments made at the previous meeting.

The task group chairperson plans and leads this meeting. He or she should be prepared to share information from "Section One: A Biblical and Theological Perspective" (pages 5-7).

### Objectives of the Meeting

Members of the task group will deepen their understanding of covenant.

needed and plan ways for insuring that support is provided.

The task group will identify volunteers for whom more adequate support is

The task group will plan its next steps and future meetings.

### Materials Needed

- Newsprint charts developed by the task group at its previous meetings
- A copy of the completed volunteer ministry position descriptions, if these are available
- A copy of "Ways to Support and Recognize Volunteers" (pages 23-24) (distributed at last meeting or on newsprint)

- A copy of "Meeting for Supporting Persons in Volunteer Ministries within and beyond the Local Church" (pages 21-22) for each task group member, if possible, or the information displayed on newsprint
- Bible for the leader

### Time Required

2 hours

### Overview of the Meeting

- Welcome, objectives, agenda
- Theological reflection and personal sharing
- Report on task group members' assignments

- Identification of needed support
- Plans for support activities
- Review and plans for next steps
- Reflection on meeting and closure

### 1

### Detailed Outline of the Meeting

The task group chairperson welcomes the members, shares the objectives for the meeting and previews the agenda. (5 minutes)

## 2

The task group chairperson shares ideas from "Covenanting Together in Mission" from the first section of this booklet, "A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry."

The task group members discuss what they believe God has promised to their

church as God's part of the covenant, and what their church has promised as its part of the covenant.

The chairperson reads I Peter 2:9-10 and offers prayer for the church as a chosen and called people obedient and responsive to God. (15 minutes)

## 3

The chairperson displays the support chart developed at the task group's previous meeting listing volunteer ministry positions, support being given, who provides support and additional information needed.

Task group members report on the additional information they secured as assigned at the previous meeting.

If the task group was able to secure volunteer ministry position descriptions, they are distributed and the task group members review and record information contained in the support section of the position descriptions.

The support information is recorded on the support chart. (25 minutes)

## 4

The task group reviews the support chart and begins to identify those volunteer ministry positions for which support seems less than adequate. It is important to consider not only volunteer

ministry positions within the local church, but also support for persons engaged in ministries in the wider church, in the community and in other settings where ministry is being done. (10 minutes)

## 5

The task group reviews "Ways to Support and Recognize Volunteers."

The task group brainstorms ways to strengthen the church's support for those volunteer positions which seem inadequately supported. Ideas to consider might include:

- a. Meet with leaders of volunteer groups to discuss ways to increase support of volunteers. Such a meeting could provide an opportunity to introduce persons to the principles underlying support and ways to support volunteers.

For example, this meeting could be for leaders of the church's educa-

tional program to explore how they support church school teachers and other workers in the educational program. This meeting might also be for chairpersons of committees and groups in the church to explore how they support the members of their groups.

- b. Consider ways to support persons for whom there is no official support source within the church. For example, who supports the official board, the chairpersons of committees, ushers and greeters?
- c. Review "Meeting for Supporting Persons in Volunteer Ministries within and beyond the Local Church" and consider planning a meeting using that design.

- d. Talk with the task group which has responsibility for orientation and training for volunteers. Explore ways in which the task groups could work together to insure that support in the form of orientation and training is being offered every volunteer.
  - e. Interview the pastor and key lay leaders from other churches about how they provide support for their volunteers. (25 minutes)
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### 6

The task group decides which actions to initiate and carry out. The group decides how to work with groups, organizations and committees within the

church to enable them to improve support for their members.

Detailed plans are made, including what steps are to be taken, who will be responsible and when assignments are to be completed. (30 minutes)

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### 7

The task group chairperson reviews accomplishments of the meeting,

reminds members of their assignments and previews the next task group meeting. The task group schedules its next meeting. (5 minutes)

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### 8

The chairperson invites reflection on the meeting and members share their feelings about the meeting.

The chairperson closes the meeting with a Scripture reading and prayer. (5 minutes)

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## Additional Meetings

Outlines of additional meetings of the task group are not provided. Future meetings will depend on the plans and assignments which the task group has made.

It is hoped that the structure of these task group meetings will be continued

as presented here. There should be regular reference to the biblical and theological basis for the task group's work and to the principles which undergird the way support is offered to volunteers.

## Meeting for Supporting Persons in Volunteer Ministries within and beyond the Local Church

This design may be used with any group of adults. It is recommended for use with a mixed group of people—some of whom have major volunteer ministries within the church and some who would identify their place of employment, volunteer work in the community, work in the wider church or some other setting as their reference point during the meeting.

This event could be led by a member of the task group working on support, by the pastor or by someone designated by the task group. The pastor, or someone given the assignment, makes the presentation in Step 2 and plans and leads the closing worship.

### Background and Preparation

Participants will identify, affirm and deepen their understanding of their ministries.

Persons will identify obstacles in doing ministry and explore ways to overcome them.

Participants will explore the ethical and moral questions raised by their ministries and ways to deal with them.

The group will plan next steps for training and support for one another and recommend steps to be taken by the church to strengthen its support of persons in ministry.

### Objectives of the Meeting

- The booklet, “The Church and Its Volunteers” from *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches* for the leader

- Newsprint, markers and masking tape
- Hymnals or song sheets
- Light refreshments (optional)

### Materials Needed

2 hours

### Time Required

- Welcome, introduction to the program, objectives, agenda
- Theological reflection and personal sharing

- Exploration of ethical issues in ministry
- Recommendations to the church
- Worship

### Overview of the Meeting

## 1

The leader welcomes the group, gives a brief introduction to the volunteer minis-

try program, shares the objectives for the meeting and previews the agenda. (10 minutes)

### Detailed Outline of the Meeting

## Meeting for Supporting Volunteers

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### 2

The pastor or another person assigned to the task makes a presentation on *ministry, volunteer ministry, and the Church as the Body of Christ*, using material from the booklet which is part of *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*, "The Church and Its Volunteers." Information from the

first section of this booklet, "A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry," would also be useful.

The presentation should stress that ministry is shared by all Christians and takes place in the church, in volunteer settings in the community and everywhere Christians live out their faith. (10 minutes)

### 3

The group divides into sub-groups of 4-6 persons. Each group discusses the presentation and members relate it to their own ministries. They plan to report their discussion to the total group.

Possible topics for discussion include:

- a. Have you ever thought about ministry in this way before? Do you consider what you do as ministry?

- b. What opportunities do you have for doing ministry?

- c. Share one experience in which you felt you ministered to a person or situation.

- d. What gets in the way of doing ministry? What would help you and others overcome these obstacles? (25 minutes)

### 4

Each small group reports and the group compares and contrasts the experiences. (15 minutes)

### 5

Break. (10 minutes)

### 6

The sub-groups reconvene and discuss the ethical and moral questions they personally face in their ministries and support and training that would strengthen their ability to minister.

Each sub-group develops recommendations about how the church could provide greater support for its members as they minister in and beyond the church. (25 minutes)

### 7

The total group reconvenes and the sub-groups report their learnings. The

group discusses the various recommendations and makes plans for following up on some of the ideas. (15 minutes)

### 8

The leader or the pastor leads worship which centers on the gifts of the Spirit, affirms the ministries of the participants

and offers an opportunity for persons to commit themselves to plans developed by the group. The meeting is closed with singing and prayer. (10 minutes)



## Ways to Support and Recognize Volunteers

Volunteers in churches often are taken for granted. They, and the services they provide, often are unrecognized, unthanked and unsupported. Yet, they deserve our recognition and gratitude. The role of the volunteer in the life and ministry of the church is an important one. Indeed, the life and ministry of the church depend on those who volunteer their time and effort to do the various tasks and services necessary or helpful for the effective and faithful functioning of the church. Without such volunteers there probably would be no church or ministry or society as we know them today.

Following is a beginning list of ways to support and recognize volunteers and the work they do within the local church, in the wider church and in the community. Add your own creative ideas and then plan how to implement as many as possible.

- Publish a list of persons who volunteer within the local church, in the wider church and in the community and distribute it to the church members, post it on bulletin boards or carry it in the church newsletter.
- Plan a worship service around the theme of volunteer ministry.
- Plan a volunteer recognition dinner, invite all volunteers and honor them with speeches, skits, certificates, awards, gifts.
- Reimburse the out-of-pocket costs volunteers incur as part of their volunteer ministries.
- Ask for a report.
- Send a birthday, anniversary or Christmas card.
- Provide child care service to enable mothers and fathers of young children to volunteer.
- Keep challenging volunteers.
- Provide good orientation, on-the-ministry training, and continuing education opportunities.
- Provide occasions for volunteers to get together for informal sharing of their experiences.
- Give additional responsibility.
- Send newsworthy information about the work of volunteers to local newspapers.
- Have a party for volunteers.
- Create pleasant surroundings for their work and meetings.
- Take time to talk with volunteers and express appreciation for their efforts.
- Share the positive comments you hear about volunteers and their work with them.
- Provide scholarships and expense money for volunteers to attend training and continuing education workshops.
- Write them thank you notes.

- Celebrate outstanding projects and achievements.
- Provide good resources and equipment for their use.
- Praise volunteers to their friends.
- Provide opportunities for individual conferences.
- Maintain an accurate record of their training and work and be prepared to provide a reference for the volunteers when they seek employment or other volunteer ministries.
- Plan a volunteer-of-the-month program or emphasis. For example: September—educational ministry workers; November—conference and association volunteers; January—official board; February—committee members; March—community volunteers; April—choir and music. Recognize these people in the church newsletter, the Sunday morning worship service, by placing their pictures on the church bulletin board.
- Send a letter of appreciation to the person's family.
- Honor groups and the individuals in the groups.
- Have a picnic for volunteers.
- Say "Thank you!"
- Smile.
- Publicize information concerning recognition which members of the church have received for their volunteer work in other groups, institutions or agencies.
- Ask volunteers to write statements on "why I serve in the church" and publish them in the church newsletter.
- Give a gift of appreciation, for example, a certificate of recognition, a book or other memento appropriate to their ministry.
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to assess their satisfactions, needs, learnings and growth in ministry.
- Form volunteer support groups for sharing joys and concerns.
- Provide opportunities for members to develop or create ministries to match and use their skills and interests.

## **The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches**

This resource developed by the Office for Church Life and Leadership of the United Church of Christ is designed for use by local churches. Its purpose is to assist local churches in relating to all members who are engaged in volunteer work motivated

by their Christian faith. This includes volunteer ministries within the life of their church, in the wider church, in the community and in all settings of their lives where they can bring a Christian perspective and influence.

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### **The Church and Its Volunteers**

This booklet provides a basic overview of a volunteer ministry program, describes all its components, contains a questionnaire to help churches assess

how they are doing in their work with volunteers and gives a number of "how-to" suggestions.

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The following booklets each include a biblical and theological perspective on volunteer ministry. They explain further one or more of the components of a volunteer ministry program.

### **Guiding the Church's Volunteer Ministry Program**

*(includes the evaluation component)*

This booklet provides a detailed plan for organizing, leading and evaluating the volunteer ministry program in a local church. It contains detailed examples of how three very different churches might have set up their volunteer ministry program. It is the basic resource for leadership of the church's volunteer ministry program.

### **Developing a Mission Statement**

This booklet outlines principles and procedures for insuring that the volunteer ministry program is guided by an overall purpose.

### **Training Volunteers**

This booklet outlines principles and procedures for equipping and enabling volunteers to do their ministries effectively.

### **Volunteers and Volunteer Ministries**

*(includes the components of preparing volunteer ministry position descriptions and identifying, matching and recruiting volunteers)*

This booklet outlines principles and procedures for identifying and describing each volunteer ministry and for getting the right person in the volunteer ministries that seem right for them and for the church.

### **Supporting Volunteers**

This booklet outlines principles and procedures for undergirding volunteers in their work.

### **Completing Volunteer Ministries**

This booklet outlines principles and procedures for recognizing volunteers when a specific ministry is concluded and assisting them in finding new volunteer ministries.

These booklets may be ordered separately or together in a binder. Order from Church Leadership Resources, P.O. Box 179, St. Louis, Missouri 63166.

