

# Completing Volunteer Ministries

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

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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*.

Volunteer positions and assignments should have clearly designated completion times. At those times, volunteers should be recognized, thanked and assisted to consider new or different volunteer ministries. 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 way in which the church handles the completion of the volunteer ministries of its members.

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 completing volunteer ministries 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.

# Completing Volunteer Ministries

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at ENERGIZE ASSOCIATES  
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Philadelphia, PA 19144



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

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Volunteers often complete an assignment or term of office in the church without any formal recognition. This is an opportune time for the church to express its gratitude for the volunteers' service, to affirm the importance of the contributions they have made, to discover what the volunteers have learned

and their ideas for making the church's mission and ministry more effective, to help them assess their growth during the volunteer experience and to consider future volunteer ministries. All of this will happen only if it is planned for and if there is a group responsible for seeing that it happens.

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### **Suggestions for Use**

This booklet on completing volunteer ministries is intended for use by a small group of persons who are responsible for planning ways for the whole church to acknowledge formally the completion of volunteers' ministries and for carrying out other procedures appropriate to this specific time in the lives of volunteers.

A church may decide to have a special group responsible for this. Most churches, however, will probably want one of the other task groups in the volunteer ministry program to assume this responsibility. For example, if there is a task group working on support, it would be appropriate for this group to assume this responsibility. Or, if there is a task group working on identification or recruitment of volunteers, it would be consistent for persons contacting volunteers at the beginning of their ministries also to contact them as they complete their volunteer ministries.

If there is a group responsible for keeping volunteer ministry position descriptions up-to-date, this group will be interested in checking out the adequacy of the position descriptions with persons completing volunteer ministries.

In the volunteer ministry program described in "Guiding the Church's Volunteer Ministry Program," another booklet in the series, *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*, the work on this component is assigned to the Task Force on Support and Completion.

A leader will be responsible for guiding the work of this group and for coordinating its work with other groups involved in the church's volunteer ministry program.

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### **What This Booklet Contains**

This booklet is a guidebook for a task group working on procedures at the time of the completion of ministries by volunteers. It is divided into three sections:

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

Section Two presents principles which provide a foundation for the group's work.

Section Three outlines a series of meetings for the task group and identi-

fies some resources to be used in the work of the task group.

The procedures outlined in this 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.

It is recommended that prior to beginning their work all members of this group have a copy of, or access to, "The Church and Its Volunteers," which is part of *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*.

The series of booklets, *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*,

is published by the Office for Church Life and Leadership of the United Church of Christ and is available from Church Leadership Resources, P.O. Box 179, St. Louis, Missouri 63166. Booklets may be ordered separately or in a notebook with the other booklets in the series.

**Related  
Resources**

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# 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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## **The Mission of the Church**

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 Church as the Body of Christ**

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.

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

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, in order to build up the body of Christ.

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

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.

### **The Gifts of the Spirit for Mission**

**Covenanting  
Together  
In Mission**

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*

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.

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**Summary**

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.

## Section Two: Principles Underlying Procedures to Be Used at the Completion of Volunteer Ministries

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Volunteer ministry positions or assignments should have clear beginnings and endings. If your church is using the volunteer ministry program outlined in *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*, volunteer ministry

position descriptions will clearly state the length of term of service for each volunteer position in the church. Each organization in the church should be encouraged to set terms of service for each volunteer position.

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### **Actions at the Time Ministries Are Completed**

There should be formal recognition within the church when a term of service is ending, with expressions of gratitude for the work and achievements of the volunteer and his or her ministry.

If possible, an individual interview or conversation with the volunteer should be held. The purpose of this conversation is to recall some of the highlights of the volunteer experience, to acknowledge some of the unhappy or disappointing experiences and to summarize what was accomplished and what the volunteer learned from the ministry experience. This is sometimes called debriefing.

This also is a time to review and revise the volunteer ministry position description, if there is one for the ministry that

is being completed. Does the description accurately describe the ministry? How should it be changed? Should the ministry itself be altered in any way?

If the volunteer has been part of a group which is continuing, then there should be an occasion within the group for expressing gratitude and saying "good-bye." A group conversation about the variety of experiences it has had during the tenure of the volunteer's ministry will provide a good feeling of closure on the ministry experience.

If a task group or other group has completed its assignment and is ending, there should be appropriate recognition of this within the church with gratitude expressed to the group and to its individual members.

## Principles

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The volunteer should be helped to assess growth during the volunteer experience and to discover new possibilities and opportunities for volunteer ministry. Persons may have discovered or developed a new interest or ability that they would like to pursue further. Often, members who complete a volunteer assignment drop out of activities for a while or are forgotten or overlooked by the church. Every volunteer should be able to explore new opportunities

and take on new challenges. In exploring new possibilities, volunteer positions in the association, conference or denomination should be made known, as well as volunteer ministry opportunities within the community.

The same actions can be taken for members who are ending a particular volunteer assignment beyond the local church in the community or in conference, denomination or ecumenical settings.

# Section Three: Procedures to be Used at the Completion of Volunteer Ministries

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This section on procedures is a guide and resource to the group responsible for planning and overseeing the way in which the church relates to its volunteers at the time they complete a volunteer ministry.

Included in this section is a form "Report and Evaluation of a Volunteer Ministry." This form is to be filled out by an individual at the completion of a specific volunteer ministry. It can be used, as well, as an outline for an interview with the person.

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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

## **Planning and Leading Meetings (continued)**

- 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.

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## **Activities Outlined in this Section**

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

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
First Meeting of the Task Group Working on Procedures at the Completion of Volunteer Ministries	2¼ to 2½ hours	Orient the task group to its work
Closure Interview with a Church Committee or Group (to be used with various groups)	1¼ to 2 hours	Express appreciation for the group's ministry and gather learnings from evaluation of the volunteer ministries
Closure Interview with a Volunteer Completing a Ministry	¾ to 1 hour	Express appreciation for the volunteer's ministry and gather learnings from evaluation of the ministry
Volunteer Ministry Recognition Service	1 hour	Acknowledge and affirm volunteers and their ministries in a worship setting

## First Meeting of the Task Group Working on Procedures at the Completion of Volunteer Ministries

This meeting outline is intended for a group that is meeting for the first time to work on procedures to be used when volunteers complete a ministry. If a group which has been working together on another aspect of the volunteer ministry program (e.g., support, identification, recruitment) assumes these responsibilities, the outline will need to be adapted by omitting Step 3.

One member of the group should be selected to plan and lead this meeting. The person should have a clear understanding of the church's volunteer ministry program and what will be expected

of this task group. This person should be familiar with the content of this booklet and may need to be prepared to make a presentation in Step 4 of the principles found in Section Two.

It would be helpful to have the pastor present for this meeting to participate in the discussion of the recognition service.

A major purpose of interviews with individuals or groups at the time they complete a volunteer ministry is to secure information which can be used to strengthen the church's volunteer ministry program.

### Background and Preparation

Members of the task group will become familiar with their responsibility at the time church members complete volunteer ministries, explore resources available for fulfilling this responsibility and plan their work in this area.

The task group will decide whether or not to have a recognition service. If a decision is made to have a service, plans will be made.

The task group will plan for its ongoing responsibility and determine its schedule of activities and meetings.

### Objectives of the Meeting

A copy of each of the following for each group member or the information on newsprint:

- "Report and Evaluation of a Volunteer Ministry" form (pages 22-23)
- "Closure Interview with a Church Committee or Group" meeting plan (pages 16-19)
- "Closure Interview with a Volunteer Completing a Ministry" outline (pages 19-21)
- "Volunteer Ministry Recognition Service" suggestions (pages 24-25)

- A copy of Section Two of this booklet (pages 9-10) for each member of the group. If copies are not available, the leader will need to be prepared to make a presentation of the principles or secure someone to do so.
- Bible for the leader
- Newsprint, markers and masking tape
- Light refreshments (optional)

### Materials Needed

# First Meeting

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**Time Required** 2¼ to 2½ hours

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**Overview of the Meeting**

- Welcome, objectives, agenda
  - Worship and reflection
  - Interpretation of task
  - Study of principles and resources
  - Development of plans
  - Plans for recognition service
  - Plans for next steps and meetings
  - Reflection, sharing, worship
- 

**Detailed Outline of the Meeting**

**1**  
The leader of the meeting welcomes the group, shares the objectives of the meeting and previews the agenda. (5 minutes)

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**2**  
The leader reads Matthew 25:14-30 and offers prayers for the gift of ministry which the church has been given and for the commitment of its members to be faithful in that ministry. (5 minutes)

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**3**  
Optional. This step is to be used only if the group is meeting for the first time.  
The leader directs the group in a discussion of volunteer work as ministry, first inviting the group members to share how they feel their own volunteer work is ministry.  
The leader then shares the definitions of *ministry* and *volunteer ministry* found in this booklet and in the introduction to the booklet, "The Church and Its Volunteers." The materials from the first section of this booklet, "A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry" may also be incorporated into the discussion. The discussion should refer to ministry within the local church, in the wider church and in the community. (15 minutes)

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**4**  
The leader reviews and summarizes the church's volunteer ministry program, highlighting the people involved and the kinds of activities that have been going on in relation to any of the components outlined on the inside cover of this booklet.  
The leader either provides copies of Section Two, the principles underlying the procedures to be used at the completion of a volunteer ministry, or makes a brief presentation of these principles. The group discusses the principles until there is relative clarity about them and about the role of the group in developing and carrying out the procedures with volunteers when their ministries end. (25 minutes)

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**5**

The leader introduces the resources identified in this booklet that can be used by the group, which include:

- "Report and Evaluation of a Volunteer Ministry" form
- "Closure Interview with a Church Committee or Group" meeting plan

- "Closure Interview with a Volunteer Completing a Ministry" outline
- "Volunteer Ministry Recognition Service" suggestions

Group members are given copies of the resources or the leader puts a brief outline of each on newsprint. (20 minutes)

**6**

The group discusses various options for providing a formal closure experience

for volunteers in the church. The following chart is placed on newsprint and is used to guide the group's discussion:

Committees, Groups, Individuals to Interview	Approximate Date for Interview	Who Will Contact and Interview
<i>Deacons</i>	<i>December meeting</i>	<i>Betty Stevens</i>
<i>Living on Less Group</i>	<i>Last meeting before summer break</i>	<i>Sally Roberts</i>
<i>Sue Davis</i>	<i>May 15</i>	<i>Jonny Adams</i>

(40 minutes)

**7**

The group discusses plans for a recognition service and decides whether or not to proceed. If the decision is made to have a service, detailed plans and assignments are made. The most

appropriate time of the year for such a service should be considered. The group may decide to meet at a later time to work on the recognition service or may delegate the planning to a sub-group. (20 minutes)

**8**

The group identifies what ongoing tasks need to be done to make sure planning is being carried out for closure experi-

ences for all volunteers. It establishes a schedule of meetings and activities related to its responsibilities for closure for the next six months or year. (15 minutes)

**9**

The leader provides an opportunity for members to reflect on the meeting and on the work of the group. The leader

affirms the work of the group as ministry and its importance in the volunteer ministry program. The leader reads Ephesians 4:11-16 and closes with prayer. (5 minutes)

## Closure Interview with a Church Committee or Group

### Background and Preparation

There are a variety of times in a church's life when volunteer ministries come to a close: at the end of the church school year, when a task force has completed its specific task, at the end of the church year when new committee members and officers are elected, when persons move or their situation changes so they can no longer carry out the particular ministry.

A member of this task group should meet with each committee or task force in the church in one of its final meetings before the committee or task force is disbanded or newly elected members begin.

This meeting plan may be used with a variety of groups and committees in the church. It can also be adapted to be used in a closure interview with an individual completing a ministry.

The leader should understand the volunteer ministry program and be prepared

to discuss ideas from the first section of this booklet, "A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry."

This meeting plan provides for two optional steps. Step 7 is used if a ministry position description is available for the group or committee members. Step 9 prepares for a recognition service. The decision about whether to have this service needs to be made prior to the interview.

A major purpose of closure interviews is to secure information that can be used to strengthen the volunteer ministry program. Interviewers should be careful to record pertinent information from the interviews and share it with appropriate groups. Following the interviews, a careful study of the completed report forms needs to be made, and the learnings used to improve the volunteer ministry program.

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### Objectives of the Meeting

The church will express appreciation to persons completing a volunteer ministry.

Members will reflect on this volunteer ministry experience and identify and celebrate their joys and learnings.

Members will complete the form, "Report and Evaluation of a Volunteer Ministry."

Members will review and revise the volunteer ministry position description for this group. (optional)

Members will reflect on the relationship between the ministry of this group and the mission of the church.

The task group will gather information to strengthen the volunteer ministry program.

The committee or group will prepare a symbol for presentation at the recognition service. (optional)

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### Materials Needed

- A copy of the church's mission statement, if available, on newsprint
- Newsprint, markers and masking tape
- Bible for the leader

A copy of the following for each participant:

- “Report and Evaluation of a Volunteer Ministry” form (pages 22-23)
- Volunteer ministry position description, if available. This may be displayed on newsprint.
- “Volunteer Ministry Recognition Service” suggestions (pages 24-25), if optional Step 9 is used
- Pencil and paper

1¼ to 2 hours

**Time Required**

- Welcome, objectives, introductions, agenda
- Personal sharing
- Completion of “Report and Evaluation of a Volunteer Ministry” form
- Review and revision of volunteer ministry position description (optional)

- Reflection on mission of the church
- Plans for recognition service (optional)
- Worship

**Overview of the Meeting**

**1**

The committee chairperson welcomes the group, shares the objectives of the

meeting and introduces the representative from the task group working on closure activities. (5 minutes)

**Detailed Outline of the Meeting**

**2**

The task group representative previews the agenda and introduces any other task group members who are present.

The task group representative expresses the appreciation of the church to persons completing a volunteer ministry. (5 minutes)

**3**

In pairs, persons share what they have most enjoyed as members of this committee or group. (5 minutes)

**4**

Each pair joins another pair and shares their joys in being members of this

committee or group. Each person then shares a learning during this ministry. (10 minutes)

**5**

The total group reconvenes and per-

sons call out some joys and learnings shared in the small groups. (10 minutes)

## Interview with Committee

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### 6

Each person is given a copy of "Report and Evaluation of a Volunteer Ministry"

and is requested to complete the form. The leader provides an opportunity for persons to discuss the responses on their report forms. (20 minutes)

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### 7

Optional. This is an important step if there is a volunteer ministry position description for a member of this group. If there is no position description, this step can be omitted, or the time used to develop a position description. See the booklet in this series, "Volunteers and Volunteer Ministries," for assistance in developing position descriptions.

Copies of the volunteer ministry position description for a member of the committee or group are distributed to each member or it is displayed on newsprint.

Persons are asked to review the position description and note any changes which would make it clearer or more accurate. The leader asks persons to call out any suggested changes and these are recorded on newsprint. Time is allowed for discussion and clarification. The group attempts to reach consensus on major changes.

The leader indicates that this information will be passed on to the task group working on volunteer ministry position descriptions, if there is such a group. (20 or 25 minutes)

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### 8

The leader points out the church's mission statement (statement of purpose or covenant), if it has one, which prior to the meeting was written on newsprint. The leader shares informa-

tion from the part of Section One entitled "The Mission of the Church."

Members are invited to share insights and perceptions about how the work of this committee or group is ministry and how it is furthering the mission of the church. (10 minutes)

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### 9

Optional. A recognition service for Sunday worship is found on pages 24-25. If it is used, a symbol for presentation at that time needs to be chosen.

The committee reflects on its work together during the past months and on what was said during this meeting.

The committee is asked to think of a symbol which could be offered in the recognition service which would symbolize something about the committee: its achievements, its understanding of ministry and mission, its learnings, its relationships. (For example, the music

committee might choose a piece of music, or the Christian education committee a book or a poster drawn by a church school class or a picture of a child.)

Persons are asked to call out ideas and the leader records them on newsprint.

The committee or group discusses the suggestions and chooses one to represent it in the recognition service.

One or more persons are given the responsibility of creating the symbol if it is something to be made or of securing it if an existing symbol is to be used. One person is selected to present the symbol and explain its meaning in the recognition service. (20 minutes)

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## 10

The leader thanks the members for their ministry and their cooperation during this meeting, reads appropriate

Scripture passages and offers a prayer for the ministry of this group, giving thanks for their contribution to the mission of the church and for their commitment. (10 minutes)

## Closure Interview with a Volunteer Completing a Ministry

Persons who serve in individual ministries within the local church or in ministries in the wider church or community should be interviewed by a member of the task group working on completing volunteer ministries. So should persons serving on committees or task groups who end their ministry before the term is over and who therefore cannot be interviewed in the group setting.

The interviewer arranges the time and place for the interview.

The form "Report and Evaluation of a Volunteer Ministry" (pages 22-23) should be completed prior to or during the interview. The interviewer, in conversational style, discusses some of the responses the person recorded on this report form and provides an opportunity for the volunteer to expand on some items and to interpret them in greater detail.

Step 5 is optional. If volunteer ministry position descriptions are being used in the church, the interviewer will provide an opportunity for the volunteer to

review his or her position description and suggest any changes in it which will make it clearer or more accurate.

Interviewers may want to practice conducting a closure interview with one another to gain practice in this skill. Role playing a closure interview is a good practice technique.

A major purpose of closure interviews is to secure information that can be used to strengthen the volunteer ministry program. Interviewers should be careful to record pertinent information from the interview and share it with the appropriate persons or groups. In churches carrying out a volunteer ministry program based on *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*, this information should be used to update the volunteer's personal information card.

The interviewer may want to review the meeting plan "Closure Interview with a Church Committee or Group" (pages 16-19) for additional ideas for conducting the interview.

### Background and Preparation

The volunteer will feel appreciated and affirmed for his or her ministry.

The volunteer will be helped to reflect on and talk about learnings, new self-perceptions and personal growth that have occurred during the ministry.

The volunteer will complete the form, "Report and Evaluation of a Volunteer Ministry."

The volunteer will review and recommend revisions in the volunteer ministry position description. (optional)

### Objectives of the Meeting

## Interview with Individual

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### Materials Needed

- A copy of the form "Report and Evaluation of a Volunteer Ministry" (pages 22-23)
  - A copy of the volunteer ministry position description for the position, if available
  - Pencil or pen
- 

### Time Required

45 minutes to 1 hour

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### Overview of the Meeting

- Welcome, greetings, explanation of the purpose of the interview
  - Completion and discussion of the form "Report and Evaluation of a Volunteer Ministry"
  - Review and revision of the volunteer ministry position description (optional)
  - Offering of thanks to, and affirmation of, the volunteer
- 

### Detailed Outline of the Meeting

#### 1

The interviewer welcomes the volunteer and engages in personal conversation. (5 minutes)

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#### 2

The interviewer explains the purpose of the interview, its importance to the volunteer ministry program and

expresses gratitude both for the volunteer ministry and for the person's willingness to be interviewed. (5 minutes)

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#### 3

The volunteer is given the form "Report and Evaluation of a Volunteer Ministry" and is asked to complete it in about 10

minutes. The report form may be given to the volunteer prior to the interview so the volunteer can complete it and bring it to the interview. (10 minutes)

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#### 4

The interviewer and volunteer discuss any of the volunteer's responses on the the report form. The volunteer is given an opportunity to share three or four of his or her responses and to interpret them in greater detail. The interviewer will want to probe for information about training, support and how the church has related to the volunteer.

volunteer feels about the way the church has supported and affirmed this ministry and how the volunteer sees this volunteer service as ministry and as an extension of the ministry of the church.

If the volunteer is concluding a ministry in the wider church or community, the interviewer will want to ask how the

The interviewer should focus on page 2 of the report form to discover what new volunteer ministries the person may be interested in and what assistance the church can provide in helping this person move into that ministry. (20-30 minutes)

**5**

Optional. This step should take place if volunteer ministry position descriptions have been prepared as part of the

volunteer ministry program. The interviewer should review the position description for this volunteer ministry to see if changes are needed for it to be clearer and more accurate. (5 minutes)

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**6**

The interviewer ends the interview by affirming and thanking the volunteer for this opportunity to share, for the

ministry he or she has been engaged in and its value to the church. The interviewer closes with a prayer of gratitude for the volunteer and for the ministry of the church. (5 minutes)

## Questionnaire

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### **Report and Evaluation of a Volunteer Ministry**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Ministry Position \_\_\_\_\_

Term of the Position: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

1. This ministry position has been satisfying for me because...
2. The major frustrations in this ministry position have been...
3. I used the following skills in this ministry position...
4. The training I received for this position included...
5. I felt supported in this position in the following ways...
6. I received the following resources which assisted me in this position...
7. I would have been able to do this ministry better if...
8. The highlights of this ministry for me have been...
9. The major accomplishments which have been achieved through this ministry include...
10. A person following me in this ministry position needs to know...

Please rate each of the following as they enabled you to do this ministry effectively and faithfully by placing an 'X' in the appropriate column.

	Outstanding	Average	Inadequate
11. The way in which the position was interpreted and explained to me before I began	_____	_____	_____
12. The training I received for doing the ministry	_____	_____	_____
13. The support I received from the church	_____	_____	_____
14. The challenge and responsibility I felt in doing this ministry	_____	_____	_____
15. The sense of importance the church places on this ministry	_____	_____	_____

The following are about your future volunteer ministries. Please indicate your interest by placing an 'X' in the appropriate column.

	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Would Like to Know More	No Interest
16. A new volunteer ministry position	_____	_____	_____	_____
a. In my church	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. In my community	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. In my denomination	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. An ecumenical setting	_____	_____	_____	_____

17. Specific volunteer ministry opportunities I would like to explore:

18. Factors in my situation that would influence my next volunteer ministry position:

Schedule:

Transportation:

Other:

19. Additional comments:

## Volunteer Ministry Recognition Service

Choose an appropriate time for a recognition service for ministries performed within and beyond the local church. This might be done at the conclusion of the church year, in conjunction with the annual meeting or on Thanksgiving Sunday. It may be during a regular Sunday morning worship service or at a special service. During the time of recognition, a special

effort should be made to include all who have fulfilled their ministries.

Individuals who have served in a ministry position beyond the local church or outside an ongoing committee should be given an opportunity to bring a symbol of their ministries in addition to those symbols chosen by committees and groups in the church.

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### Scripture Suggestions

I Peter 2:9-10 (priesthood of all believers)  
Romans 12:1-8 (differing gifts)  
Matthew 20:20-28 (servant)

Matthew 25:14-30 (parable of the talents)  
Matthew 25:31-40 (doing for the least)  
I Corinthians 12:4-30 (Body of Christ and differing gifts)

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### Litany Based on Romans 12:1-8

Leader: I implore you by God's mercy to offer yourselves to God: a living sacrifice, dedicated and fit for God's acceptance.

People: We celebrate today those persons in our church who have shown their dedication by their work as volunteers.

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Leader: Do not be conceited or think too highly of yourself. For as in a single human body there are many limbs and organs, all with different functions, so all of us, united with Christ, form one body, serving individually as limbs and organs to one another.

People: We celebrate the many gifts, talents, skills and opportunities of these people who have united in the work of the church.

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Leader: The gifts we possess differ as they are allotted to us by God's grace, and must be exercised accordingly. If you give to charity, give with all your heart; if you are a leader, exert yourself to lead; if you are helping others in distress, do it cheerfully.

People: We celebrate those persons who have given with all their hearts, have exerted themselves in leadership, and have worked cheerfully.

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Unison: Praise God for these people,  
their unique characteristics  
and their willingness to serve.

**Litany  
(continued)**

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The pastor or other leader may  
preach on one of the themes from the  
biblical and theological perspective on  
volunteer ministry or several persons  
may share their experiences and

learnings from their work in various  
ministries. The persons chosen to  
speak should represent volunteer min-  
istries within and beyond the local  
church.

**Meditation**

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Ushers collect gifts and tithes.

The choir sings an offertory anthem.  
At the conclusion of the anthem a  
designated member brings forward a  
symbol of the choir (or music commit-  
tee) and stands with it before the altar  
explaining its meaning.

Ask specific groups of persons to  
stand to be recognized: all boards and  
committees, church school officers  
and teachers, volunteers in the com-

munity and wider church settings. As  
each group stands, the designated  
person comes to the altar with the  
symbol of the group and explains its  
meaning.

The congregation stands as the  
ushers bring forward the offering  
plates.

Receive the symbols and monetary  
gifts.

Dedicate the gifts and symbols.

**Offering  
and  
Dedication  
of Gifts**

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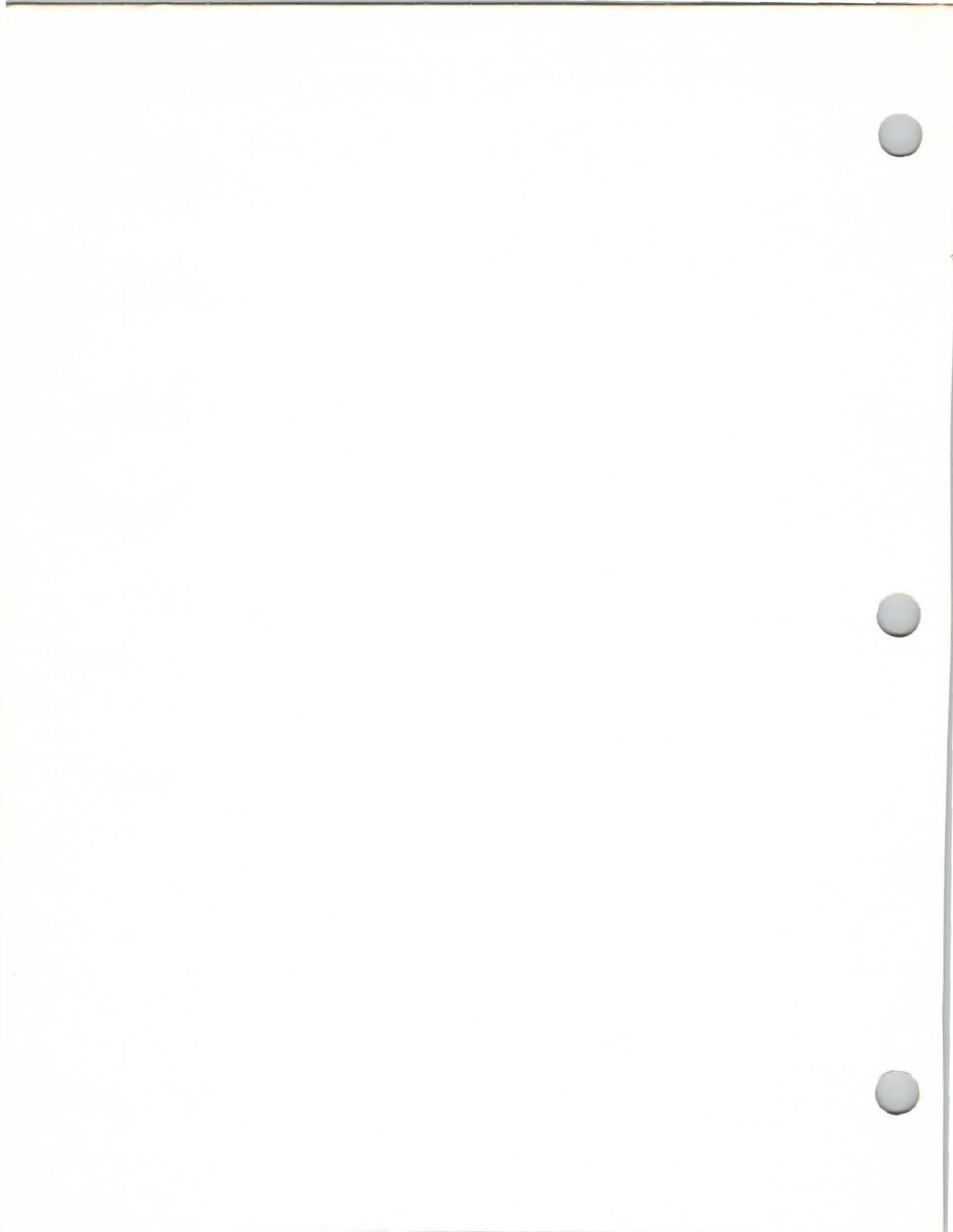
It may be that particular persons will  
be set apart because of special  
services they have performed or  
because of the length of their minis-

tries. A person may be appointed to  
acknowledge their work during the  
service or some other form of recogni-  
tion may be chosen.

**Special  
Recognition**







## **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.

