



Guiding  
the Church's  
Volunteer  
Ministry Program

Office for Church Life and Leadership

---

## Definitions and Introduction

---

**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*.

---

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

---

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

---

**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.

---

## This Booklet

---

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

This booklet is written for those who give leadership and oversight to the overall volunteer ministry program in the church. It is for those who ask the questions: "How do we organize a volunteer ministry program? How do we get started? How do we relate it to what we are already doing? What do we do first, second, third? How do we keep it going once we have begun?"

In the belief that all parts of the volunteer ministry program should be interrelated, this booklet presents the model of a well-organized and structured plan which a church can follow. It calls for a Ministry of Volunteers Team and four task forces to give leadership to the volunteer ministry program.

In recognition that each church is unique, a variety of alternative ideas and suggestions are presented to help a church adapt the resources to its own situation.

This booklet is fundamental to all the other booklets in this series.

# Guiding the Church's Volunteer Ministry Program

Volunteerism Resource Center  
at ENERGIZE ASSOCIATES  
6456 Wissahickon Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19144



---

CL20795M

***Guiding the Church's Volunteer Ministry Program***, a booklet in the series,  
***The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches***

---

cartoons by Doug Brunner  
copyright 1979, Office for Church Life and Leadership  
United Church of Christ

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	4
Section One: A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry .....	6
Section Two: A Model Plan for Organizing and Administering a Volunteer Ministry Program .....	9
Sample Volunteer Ministry Position Description for Member of Ministry of Volunteers Team .....	14
Sample Volunteer Ministry Position Description for Member of Task Force on Position Descriptions .....	16
Sample Volunteer Ministry Position Description for Member of Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting .....	18
Sample Volunteer Ministry Position Description for Member of Task Force on Training .....	20
Sample Volunteer Ministry Position Description for Member of Task Force on Support and Completion .....	22
Chart: Components of the Volunteer Ministry Program .....	24
Section Three: Procedures for Guiding a Volunteer Ministry Program.....	27
Chart: Activities Outlined in This Section.....	27
Planning and Leading Meetings .....	28
Chart: Suggested Sequence of Activities for Beginning a Volunteer Ministry Program .....	31
Orientation for the Ministry of Volunteers Team .....	32
Orientation for the Task Force Members.....	36
Orientation for Leaders of the Church .....	40
Evaluating the Volunteer Ministry Program .....	43
Checklist for Evaluating the Volunteer Ministry Program .....	46
Section Four: Three Experiences with the Volunteer Ministry Program .....	50
One Church's Experience with the Volunteer Ministry Program .....	50
One Person's Experience with the Volunteer Ministry Program .....	55
Diary of a Pastor of a Small Church .....	59

Every church has volunteers. These persons are members of the church who do the work of the church—maintain the church, sustain the life and program of the church and carry the church's ministry into the community and world. Volunteers teach in church school, serve on committees, visit the sick, and give leadership to the city's fair housing commission.

In the church we are growing in our appreciation of the work volunteers do and recognize it as the ministry of the church. We also are becoming more aware of the ways the church as an

institution can relate to its members who are engaged in volunteer ministries so they are supported and prepared for their work.

Every church gives attention in various ways to how it recruits, trains and supports its volunteers. Some have very clear guidelines for doing this, while others give only minimal thought to how this is done.

This booklet is written for those church leaders who recognize the importance of the church's work with its volunteers and want to give more attention to it.

---

## **Suggestions for Use**

This booklet is valuable to those who want to become familiar with what is meant by a volunteer ministry program and to learn how to organize such a program in a local church. It should be read by those persons who are considering whether or not the church should work on its volunteer ministry program in a new way. Thus, it will help in the

decision about what to do and how involved to become in the program.

Once your church has decided to work on its volunteer ministry program, this booklet will be a basic guide for the individuals or group given responsibility for seeing that the program is organized and runs smoothly.

---

## **What This Booklet Contains**

This booklet is a guide for the church as it organizes and carries out its volunteer ministry program. It is divided into four sections:

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

Section Two presents a complete plan for organizing, guiding and evaluating a volunteer ministry program and alternatives and adaptations.

Section Three provides detailed instructions for orienting and training persons to be leaders in the volunteer ministry program.

Section Four gives examples of how three churches might have approached the task of organizing their volunteer ministry program.

---

## **Adapting This Resource**

It cannot be emphasized enough that there are many ways to organize and give guidance to a church's volunteer ministry program. It is important for each church to tailor-make its own way of doing this.

This booklet, like the others in this series, is written to provide specific

assistance in organizing and carrying out a volunteer ministry program. However, it is not to be used rigidly. Each church should take the ideas and plans outlined here and adapt them to its particular situation. The more creative and flexible a church is, the stronger the volunteer ministry program will be.

Three major factors to consider in adapting these materials are:

1. The size of your church. It is impossible for a guidebook to give instructions that will be equally applicable to a church of 75 members and to a church of 2,000 members. Thus, it is imperative to translate the guidance provided into a particular local church situation.
2. The traditions of your church. Each church already has guidelines for its volunteer ministry program. Your church constitution and bylaws probably specify some of the required ways the church relates to its volunteers. There are undoubtedly patterns already established for finding nominees for offices and securing persons to serve on committees.

If there are strong, effective traditions for doing some aspects of your church's volunteer ministry program, you may want to build on these rather than introduce something entirely new. On the other hand, if you do not have a history of working with volunteers in a specific way, or if you are not entirely satisfied with the way things are being done, there may be greater opportunity for introducing a new and creative approach.

3. Leadership. The commitment, enthusiasm, skill and number of persons who will give leadership to your volunteer ministry program will affect the church's program. You may have a significant group of persons who are ready for this kind of involvement, who may have experience in working in other volunteer programs or who have considerable leadership ability. You may, however, have only a small core of leaders who already feel burdened by the many things they are asked to do. These factors will influence whether you move quickly and broadly on the full volunteer ministry program or whether you begin working on selected parts of the program and carefully develop the needed leaders.

It is important to realize that any resource must be modified and shaped so that it fits into a specific situation.

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.

There is a list of the booklets in the series on the inside back cover of this booklet.

### **Related Resources**

---

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

---

*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.

---

## **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.

---

## **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.

*1 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.

---

**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: A Model Plan for Organizing and Administering a Volunteer Ministry Program

## Team and Task Forces

This section introduces one plan for organizing and administering a local church volunteer ministry program. It is specific and detailed. It gives careful attention to all the major components of a volunteer ministry program. Some churches may find it helpful to follow the plan closely. Others will take the ideas presented here, or some of them, and adapt them to their own situations.

One of the major purposes of this section is to emphasize the importance of coordinating all activities and persons involved in a church's volunteer ministry

program. This booklet is written as a guide for the group of persons who will devote a major amount of time and energy to coordination throughout the year. This group is referred to as the Ministry of Volunteers Team.

The amount of work required to organize and implement the church's volunteer ministry program is quite extensive. Thus, this booklet suggests that a church consider establishing four task forces with specific assignments to work with the Ministry of Volunteers Team.

The Ministry of Volunteers Team would have the following responsibilities:

1. Overall responsibility for, and supervision of, the volunteer ministry program.
2. Assurance that the church has a mission statement and goals for its life and mission.

3. Training and supervision of the four task forces.
4. Regular evaluation of the volunteer ministry program.
5. Regular reports to the official board and church about the volunteer ministry program.

### Team Responsibilities

The four task forces and their basic assignments include:

1. The **Task Force on Position Descriptions** sees that position

descriptions for all volunteer ministries are prepared, regularly updated and kept in a central file.

### Task Force Responsibilities

**Task Force Responsibilities (continued)**

2. The **Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting** sees that information is secured from members of the church about their interests in and qualifications for volunteer ministry positions. It matches members with ministry positions, using the ministry position descriptions prepared by the Task Force on Position Descriptions and then recruits persons for the ministries.
3. The **Task Force on Training** collects information about training needs of volunteers and plans ways for those needs to be met.
4. The **Task Force on Support and Completion** insures that all volunteers in the church's volunteer

ministry program receive adequate support, that the appreciation of the church is expressed to them and that at the conclusion of the volunteer ministry assignment the volunteer is recognized and honored.

Detailed volunteer ministry position descriptions for persons who serve on the Ministry of Volunteers Team and on the four task forces are found in this section.

Other booklets in *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches* contain specific guidelines for undertaking all these tasks. (Each task force works primarily with the booklet or booklets which deal with its particular assignment.)

**Structure**

The following diagram illustrates the suggested structure for administering the volunteer ministry program and the resources each would use:



The chairperson of each task force serves on the Ministry of Volunteers Team.

Each church will have to identify persons qualified to serve on the task forces. The following chart suggests the size of each task force depending on the size of the church.

**Size of the Task Forces**

	<b>50-150 Church Members</b>	<b>150-500 Church Members</b>	<b>500+ Church Members</b>
Task Force on Position Descriptions	1-2	1-3	3-4
Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting	2-3	3-4	3-6
Task Force on Training	2	3	3-6
Task Force on Support and Completion	2	3	3-6

This is only a suggested structure. Each church should use or adapt it according to its own unique situation and needs.

In organizing the volunteer ministry program, churches will have to give careful attention to the ways in which they are currently organized to get these tasks completed. Some of the following issues will have to be addressed.

Many churches have a nominating committee responsible for selecting and recruiting persons for elected official positions within the church. The role of this committee and its relationship to the volunteer ministry program will need to be clarified. There are at least three possible options:

1. The present nominating committee would be asked to become the

Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting. This task force's responsibilities most closely resemble the work most nominating committees do. The responsibilities of this task force would increase the amount of work of the nominating committee because it would expand the number of ministry positions for which the nominating committee would be responsible. If this were done, the chairperson of the nominating committee would become the chairperson of the Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting and a member of the Ministry of Volunteers Team.

**Relationship to Nominating Committee**

### **Relationship to Nominating Committee (continued)**

2. The nominating committee would retain its function of nominating persons for the official positions of the church, but would do this in cooperation with the Ministry of Volunteers Team. The nominating committee would receive the volunteer ministry position descriptions developed for the official positions and a list of potential candidates qualified for the positions.
3. The functions of the nominating committee would be transferred to the Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting and the nominating committee would be disbanded. This might require some modifications in the church's bylaws.

### **Relationship to Other Organizations**

The relationship between the organizations and the groups of the church which presently select their own members and leaders and the Ministry of Volunteers Team will need to be worked out. For example, women's organizations in most churches select their own officers and committee chairpersons. Some options for dealing with this situation include:

1. Organizations would continue to select their own leaders, but would inform the Ministry of Volunteers Team and the appropriate task forces of their actions.
2. The Ministry of Volunteers Team and its task forces would work with the organizations as they select, train and support their leaders. For example, the Task Force on Position Descriptions might assist the organizations in writing position descriptions for their leadership positions. The Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting

could provide the organizations with the names of potential leaders which it has identified. The Task Force on Training could work with the organizations to plan or secure training for their leaders. The Task Force on Support and Completion could help the organizations develop procedures to insure that these important functions are carried out.

3. The organizations would have representatives on the Ministry of Volunteers Team and one or more of the task forces who would be responsible for coordination between the volunteer ministry program and their organizations.

This is a very sensitive area in the church's life and all persons and groups who will be affected by the decisions should be involved in the decision-making process.

### **Role of the Pastor**

The role of the pastor or pastors is a crucial issue and will need to be clarified early in the process. It is recommended that the pastor be a member of the Ministry of Volunteers Team. In most cases, he or she will want to be deeply involved in the volunteer ministry program. The pastor is a valuable resource

person for the team since he or she has many opportunities to know the volunteer ministries and the skills, interests and commitments of church members.

## **Volunteer Ministry Position Descriptions**

One activity in the volunteer ministry program is to prepare written ministry position descriptions for each volunteer ministry. These ministry position descriptions are used to clarify expectations of persons who undertake a particular volunteer ministry.

Sample ministry position descriptions for persons who serve on the Ministry of Volunteers Team and the four task forces recommended for this volunteer ministry program follow on the next pages. These position descriptions are presented here for several reasons:

1. They illustrate one aspect of the volunteer ministry program. This is the kind of material the program produces and uses.
2. They can be helpful in identifying persons for the Ministry of Volunteers Team and task forces if this plan is adopted.
3. They can be helpful in recruiting persons to serve on the Ministry of Volunteers Team and task forces.

These volunteer ministry position descriptions are only samples. Each church should modify them to meet the needs of its own organizational life.

## **Sample Volunteer Ministry Position Description for Member of Ministry of Volunteers Team**

**Title of the Position** Member of the Ministry of Volunteers Team

---

**Purpose of the  
Ministry of  
Volunteers Team**

The purpose of the Ministry of Volunteers Team is to organize, implement and promote a volunteer ministry program within the church. The volunteer ministry program will provide opportunities for all church members to express their faith through volunteer ministry and to facilitate the church in fulfilling its mission through the volunteer ministries of its members.

---

**Type of Work**

The Ministry of Volunteers Team will give direction and oversight to the volunteer ministry program. It will provide ways for the church to write a mission statement and goals for its life and mission. It will appoint and direct the work of task forces to implement parts of the program. It will provide regular evaluation of the program and report to the official board and the congregation. Most of the work will be done in meetings of the team or task forces.

---

**Term of the Position**

Persons serve on the Ministry of Volunteers Team for a term of two years. Members of the team are selected by the official board.

---

**Expectations the  
Church Has of Team  
Member**

When a church first begins this program, team members will invest major amounts of time and energy. Within the first two or three months, members of the team will participate in an orientation for team members, an orientation for task force members and an orientation for leaders of the church, plus an event of the church to develop a mission statement. After this initial heavy schedule, the team will meet approximately once every month or two at the call of the chairperson. Four members of the team will serve as task force chairpersons, which will require significant amounts of time from them in addition to their work on the team. The major task force work will begin following the activities described above. Team members who also serve as task force chairpersons should refer to the volunteer ministry position description for their task force to secure additional information about expectations.

Each person on the team is expected to attend all meetings of the team and accept some additional assignments between meetings. Members are expected to give the program high priority in their lives, particularly during its initial phase in the church.

---

**Accountability of the  
Team Member**

The team is accountable to the official board and will report to it regularly. Members of the team are accountable to the chairperson of the team, who is appointed by the official board.

The pastor will be a member of the team and will be available to members for counsel and consultation when needed.

**Relationship of the  
Team Member to  
Staff Members**

The team may need secretarial assistance in preparing its materials and handling correspondence. Arrangements for using the services of the church secretary or the church office facilities should be made with the pastor.

---

Persons selected for this volunteer ministry position should be stimulated by the challenge of implementing a program to strengthen the life of the church. They should have considerable familiarity with the church and its members. They should be able to work with adults and be perceived by the church members as persons who have a faith commitment to the life of the church. They should have the time and energy necessary to undertake this major task for two years. They should not hold another major volunteer ministry position in the church during their term on this team.

---

**Qualifications of the  
Team Member**

An orientation session will be held for the team, followed by an orientation session for the task forces which will also involve the team. A meeting with church leaders for the purpose of introducing the volunteer ministry program to them and securing their cooperation and support will be held. Each member of the team will have access to a copy of *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches* and will be provided with materials from that resource for his or her assigned tasks. The pastor will give priority attention to the team during the first year. The team will have a budget of \$250 for each year. Some secretarial services can be arranged as needed.

**Support for the  
Team and  
Resources  
Available to It**

### **Sample Volunteer Ministry Position Description for Member of Task Force on Position Descriptions**

**Title of the Position** Member of the Task Force on Position Descriptions

---

**Purpose of the Task Force**

This task force is responsible for implementing one part of the volunteer ministry program which has been adopted by the official board. The purpose of the task force is to assist the church in writing volunteer ministry position descriptions for the various ministries within the life of the church. The task force is also responsible for securing volunteer ministry position descriptions from community agencies and for volunteer positions in the wider church.

Once the position descriptions have been written, it is the responsibility of this task force to maintain updated records of all volunteer ministry position descriptions.

---

**Type of Work**

Persons on this task force will attend several meetings for orientation to the volunteer ministry program and for training in writing volunteer ministry position descriptions. The task force will convene a meeting of representatives of the boards, committees and organizations of the church to develop volunteer ministry position descriptions for their respective groups. The task force will develop volunteer ministry position descriptions for those volunteer ministries not connected with a specific organization. The task force will also identify and secure position descriptions for volunteer ministries in community agencies and in the wider church.

---

**Term of the Position**

Persons on this task force are selected by the Ministry of Volunteers Team in consultation with the official board and the pastor of the church. They serve a term of two years.

---

**Expectations the Church Has of Task Force Member**

The implementation of this phase of the volunteer ministry program will require a great deal of time. Persons on this task force are expected to attend all meetings of the task force, be present at all activities of the task force and accept assignments to be completed between meetings. The time commitment will be greater at the beginning of the program—perhaps one meeting a month of the task force plus meetings with the boards, committees and organizations of the church and the community. Members of the task force are expected to be familiar with all phases of the volunteer ministry program.

The chairperson of the task force is a member of the Ministry of Volunteers Team. This facilitates open lines of communication between the task force and the Ministry of Volunteers Team.

---

**Accountability**

The task force is selected by the Ministry of Volunteers Team in consultation with the official board and the pastor. The members of the task force are accountable to

the chairperson of the task force. The task force is accountable to the Ministry of Volunteers Team. If questions arise, the task force can secure assistance from the Ministry of Volunteers Team and the pastor.

---

The pastor is a member of the Ministry of Volunteers Team and gives high priority to this program. The pastor is available to provide counsel or information to the task force upon request. The pastor is not expected to attend the meetings of the task force unless this is mutually agreed upon.

**Relationship of the Task Force Member to Staff Members**

The task force may need secretarial assistance in preparing its materials and handling correspondence. Arrangements for using the services of the church secretary or church office facilities should be made with the pastor.

---

Persons selected for this volunteer ministry position should be stimulated by the challenge of implementing a program to strengthen the life of the church. They should have considerable familiarity with the church. They should be able to work with adults and be perceived by the church members as persons who have a faith commitment to the life of the church. They should have some leadership skills and experience.

**Qualifications of the Task Force Member**

Persons serving on this task force participate in an orientation session on the volunteer ministry program and receive training in writing position descriptions prior to working with groups within the church. Each member of the task force has a copy of, or has access to, *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*. Each member of the task force is reimbursed for any expenses incurred in connection with this ministry. The task force will have a budget of \$50 each year.

**Support for the Task Force and Resources Available to It**

## **Sample Volunteer Ministry Position Description for Member of Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting**

**Title of the Position** Member of the Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting

---

**Purpose of the Task Force** This task force is responsible for implementing one part of the volunteer ministry program which has been adopted by the official board. The purpose of the task force is to identify the volunteer ministry gifts and interests of church members; to match those gifts and interests with volunteer ministry positions available within the life of the church, community and wider church; and to recruit church members for the volunteer ministry positions.

---

**Type of Work** Persons on this task force will be involved in a variety of activities: orientation sessions on the volunteer ministry program; task force meetings; developing and administering data-gathering forms for identifying volunteer ministry gifts and interests; collecting and organizing volunteer ministry data about each church member; meeting individually with members of the church; nominating persons for elected volunteer ministry positions within the church.

---

**Term of the Position** Persons on this task force are selected by the Ministry of Volunteers Team in consultation with the official board and the pastor of the church. They serve a term of two years.

---

**Expectations the Church Has of Task Force Member** The implementation of this phase of the volunteer ministry program will require a great deal of time. Persons on this task force are expected to attend all meetings of the task force, be present at all activities of the task force and accept assignments to be completed between meetings. The time commitment will be greater at the beginning of the program—perhaps one meeting a month of the task force plus meetings with individuals and groups in the church. Members of the task force are expected to be familiar with all phases of the volunteer ministry program.

The chairperson of the task force is a member of the Ministry of Volunteers Team. This facilitates open lines of communication between the task force and the Ministry of Volunteers Team.

---

**Accountability** The task force is selected by the Ministry of Volunteers Team in consultation with the official board and the pastor. The members of the task force are accountable to the chairperson of the task force. The task force is accountable to the Ministry of Volunteers Team. If questions arise, the task force can secure assistance from the Ministry of Volunteers Team and the pastor.

---

The pastor is a member of the Ministry of Volunteers Team and gives high priority to this program. The pastor is available to provide counsel or information to the task force upon request. The pastor is not expected to attend the meetings of the task force unless this is mutually agreed upon.

**Relationship of the  
Task Force Member  
to Staff Members**

The task force may need secretarial assistance in preparing its materials and handling correspondence. Arrangements for using the services of the church secretary or church office facilities should be made with the pastor.

---

Persons selected for this volunteer ministry position should be stimulated by the challenge of implementing a program to strengthen the life of the church. They should have considerable familiarity with the church and its members. They should be able to work with adults and be perceived by the church members as persons who have a faith commitment to the life of the church. Persons selected for this task force should have some familiarity with data gathering and have some leadership skills and experience.

---

**Qualifications of the  
Task Force Member**

Persons on the Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting participate in an orientation session on the volunteer ministry program. Each member of the task force has a copy of, or has access to, *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*. Each member of the task force is reimbursed for any expenses incurred in connection with this ministry. The task force will have a budget of \$50 each year.

**Support for the  
Task Force  
and Resources  
Available to It**

## **Sample Volunteer Ministry Position Description for Member of Task Force on Training**

**Title of the Position** Member of the Task Force on Training

---

**Purpose of the Task Force** The task force is responsible for implementing the training part of the volunteer ministry program which has been adopted by the official board. The purpose of the task force is to understand the training needs and to provide training opportunities for church members involved in volunteer ministries within the church, community and wider church.

---

**Type of Work** Persons on this task force will attend several orientation sessions on the volunteer ministry program and all task force meetings. The task force will meet with individuals and groups to assess training needed by those engaged in volunteer ministries. The task force is then responsible for making the necessary arrangements for offering training opportunities to meet those needs.

---

**Term of the Position** Persons on this task force are selected by the Ministry of Volunteers Team in consultation with the official board and the pastor of the church. They serve a term of two years.

---

**Expectations the Church Has of Task Force Member** The implementation of this phase of the volunteer ministry program will require a great deal of time. Persons on this task force are expected to attend all meetings of the task force, be present at all activities of the task force and accept assignments to be completed between meetings. The time commitment will involve one meeting a month of the task force plus meetings with individuals and groups in the church. The work of this task force is continuous throughout the year. Members of the task force are expected to be familiar with all phases of the volunteer ministry program.

The chairperson of the task force is a member of the Ministry of Volunteers Team. This facilitates open lines of communication between the task force and the Ministry of Volunteers Team.

---

**Accountability** The task force is selected by the Ministry of Volunteers Team in consultation with the official board and the pastor. The members of the task force are accountable to the chairperson of the task force. The task force is accountable to the Ministry of Volunteers Team. If questions arise, the task force can secure assistance from the Ministry of Volunteers Team and the pastor.

The pastor is a member of the Ministry of Volunteers Team and gives high priority to this program. The pastor is available to provide counsel or information to the task force upon request. The pastor is not expected to attend the meetings of the task force unless this is mutually agreed upon.

**Relationship of the  
Task Force Member  
to Staff Members**

The task force may need secretarial assistance in preparing its materials and handling correspondence. Arrangements for using the services of the church secretary or church office facilities should be made with the pastor.

---

Persons selected for this volunteer ministry position should be stimulated by the challenge of implementing a program to strengthen the life of the church. They should have considerable familiarity with the church and its members. They should be able to work with adults and be perceived by the church members as persons who have a faith commitment to the life of the church. Persons selected for this task force should have some leadership skills and experience and some understanding of what training volunteers is and what it entails. They should be able to work with groups of people.

**Qualifications of the  
Task Force Member**

Persons on the Task Force on Training participate in an orientation session on the volunteer ministry program. Each member of the task force has a copy of, or has access to, *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*. Each member of the task force is reimbursed for any expenses incurred in connection with this ministry. The task force will have a budget of \$50 each year.

**Support for the  
Task Force  
and Resources  
Available to It**

# Task Force on Support and Completion

---

## **Sample Volunteer Ministry Position Description for Member of Task Force on Support and Completion**

**Title of the Position** Member of the Task Force on Support and Completion

---

**Purpose of the Task Force** This task force is responsible for implementing one part of the volunteer ministry program which has been adopted by the official board. The purpose of the task force is to assist the church in intentionally supporting and regularly recognizing persons for their volunteer ministries within the church, community and wider church; and to reflect with individuals and groups on their volunteer ministry experiences as they come to a close.

---

**Type of Work** Persons on this task force will attend several orientation sessions on the volunteer ministry program and all task force meetings. They will meet with volunteers individually during the year to assess how things are going. At the end of the year, they will meet with volunteers to evaluate the volunteer ministry experience and make future projections for volunteer ministries. They will develop and implement a plan for formal recognition of persons for their volunteer ministries.

---

**Term of the Position** Persons on this task force are selected by the Ministry of Volunteers Team in consultation with the official board and the pastor of the church. They serve a term of two years.

---

**Expectations the Church Has of Task Force Member** The implementation of this phase of the volunteer ministry program will require a great deal of time. Persons on this task force are expected to attend all meetings of the task force, be present at all activities of the task force and accept assignments to be completed between meetings. The time commitment will involve one meeting a month of the task force plus meetings with individuals and groups in the church. The work of this task force is continuous throughout the year. Members of the task force are expected to be familiar with all phases of the volunteer ministry program.

The chairperson of the task force is a member of the Ministry of Volunteers Team. This facilitates open lines of communication between the task force and the Ministry of Volunteers Team.

---

**Accountability** The task force is selected by the Ministry of Volunteers Team in consultation with the official board and the pastor. The members of the task force are accountable to the chairperson of the task force. The task force is accountable to the Ministry of Volunteers Team. If questions arise, the task force can secure assistance from the Ministry of Volunteers Team and the pastor.

The pastor is a member of the Ministry of Volunteers Team and gives high priority to this program. The pastor is available to provide counsel or information to the task force upon request. The pastor is not expected to attend the meetings of the task force unless this is mutually agreed upon.

**Relationship of the  
Task Force Member  
to Staff Members**

The task force may need secretarial assistance in preparing its materials and handling correspondence. Arrangements for using the services of the church secretary or church office facilities should be made with the pastor.

---

Persons selected for this volunteer ministry position should be stimulated by the challenge of implementing a program to support persons and strengthen the life of the church. They should have an understanding of the structure, goals and mission of the church. They should be able to work with adults and be perceived by the church members as persons who have a faith commitment to the life of the church. Persons selected for this task force should possess some leadership skills and experience. They should be able to encourage and support persons and have some insight for recommending future volunteer ministry possibilities.

---

**Qualifications of the  
Task Force Member**

Persons on the Task Force on Support and Completion participate in an orientation session. Each member of the task force has a copy of, or has access to, *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*. Each member of the task force is reimbursed for any expenses incurred in connection with this ministry. The task force will have a budget of \$50 each year.

**Support for the  
Task Force  
and Resources  
Available to It**

## Components of the Volunteer Ministry Program

<b>Title</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Booklet Needed</b>
Developing a Mission Statement	To describe the purpose of the church in relation to its unique setting and resources, and to set annual goals for its life	Ministry of Volunteers Team	<i>Developing a Mission Statement</i>
Writing Volunteer Ministry Position Descriptions	To name and describe all volunteer ministries of members of the congregation	Task Force on Position Descriptions	<i>Volunteers and Volunteer Ministries</i>
Identifying Volunteers	To discover the interests, abilities and experiences of members of the church and determine potential volunteer ministry positions for them	Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting	<i>Volunteers and Volunteer Ministries</i>
Matching Volunteers and Ministry Positions	To determine what persons are most qualified and suited, or have potential, for particular volunteer ministry positions, and what positions are most suitable for particular persons	Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting	<i>Volunteers and Volunteer Ministries</i>
Recruiting Volunteers	To secure the commitment of persons to particular volunteer ministries	Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting	<i>Volunteers and Volunteer Ministries</i>
Training Volunteers	To orient, prepare and equip persons with the necessary information, knowledge and skill to do a volunteer ministry	Task Force on Training	<i>Training Volunteers</i>
Supporting Volunteers	To express support, recognition and gratitude to volunteers for their ministries	Task Force on Support and Completion	<i>Supporting Volunteers</i>
Completing Volunteer Ministries	To help volunteers reflect on the meaning and learnings from their volunteer ministries and assist them in the transition from one volunteer ministry to another	Task Force on Support and Completion	<i>Completing Volunteer Ministries</i>
Evaluating the Volunteer Ministry Program	To evaluate the volunteer ministry program and make any necessary changes to keep it functioning effectively	Ministry of Volunteers Team	<i>Guiding a Volunteer Ministry Program</i>

## Deciding to Use the Program

A church is already engaged in many of the activities outlined in the ministry of volunteers program. However, most churches can become more effective in this work by using the principles and procedures provided in this series, *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*.

The following procedure is suggested for churches considering the use of these resources in establishing a coordinated volunteer ministry program.

The pastor, official board and other leaders in the church should become familiar with the resources which are the basis of the program. A good introduction to the program is found in "The Church and Its Volunteers," a booklet from *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*. It would be good for church leaders to read this booklet, complete the questionnaire and consider what further information they need and how to begin to implement the program.

There are several ways for these leaders to develop greater familiarity with the program and its resources:

1. Everyone involved in the decision-making process could receive and study a copy of all booklets which together make up *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*.
2. One person could be responsible for studying all the materials and then making a presentation to the other leaders of the church.
3. The various booklets which make up *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches* could be assigned to individuals for study, and then all these persons could gather to share their learnings and to consider what steps the church should take.
4. A person from the conference or a church which has used the resources could be invited to introduce the volunteer ministry program and answer questions about it.

At the very least, persons who are going to make the decision about the church's use of *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches* should be familiar with "The Church and Its Volunteers" and this booklet, "Guiding the Church's Volunteer Ministry Program."

## Optional Ways to Organize a Volunteer Ministry Program in a Local Church

This booklet presents a comprehensive and detailed plan for organizing a volunteer ministry program in a church. In deciding to use this plan or to adapt it in certain ways, a church may want to consider some of the following options:

1. Establish an entirely new structure similar to the one outlined in this booklet that would use the Ministry of Volunteers Team and task force model.

### **Optional Ways to Organize (continued)**

2. Organize a comprehensive program, but use the present structure of the church to carry it out. For example, the present nominating committee could be given the task of preparing ministry position descriptions and identifying, matching and recruiting volunteers. The deacons could be assigned responsibility for supporting volunteers and handling the tasks at the completion of their volunteer service. The church's official board could be assigned responsibility for the mission statement and for evaluating the volunteer ministry program. The Christian education committee could be assigned responsibility for training.
3. Organize a comprehensive program using some of the present structure and creating some new structures. For example, the present nominating committee could be given responsibility for identifying, matching and recruiting volunteers. The official board could be given responsibility for the mission statement and evaluating the volunteer ministry program. Three new task groups would be created: to develop ministry position descriptions, for support and completing volunteer ministries and for training.
4. Designate as "director," "administrator" or "coordinator" of the church's volunteer ministry program one person who would devote a significant amount of time to the task of organizing and guiding the program. This could be a volunteer position, or it could be a paid staff position in a larger church.
5. Work on one or more of the components of the volunteer ministry program where the need is greatest, or where there already is an interest. For example, focus on improving the way the church supports its volunteers by using only that booklet and concentrating on that area for a period of time. Spend a year developing volunteer ministry position descriptions for all the positions in the church. Devote a period of time to beginning or improving the training program of volunteers. It is not necessary to do everything at once. Establish a long-range plan in which you give attention to one or two of the components each year until you have a comprehensive program operating smoothly.

# Section Three: Procedures for Guiding a Volunteer Ministry Program

This section is based on the structure outlined earlier in this booklet which calls for a Ministry of Volunteers Team and four task forces. Once a church has decided to engage in the volunteer ministry program and the Ministry of Volunteers Team and its chairperson

have been appointed, the first three activities of the program are orientation meetings for which the team is responsible. Meeting plans for these orientation sessions, as well as for later meetings of the Ministry of Volunteers Team, are contained in this booklet.

## Activities Outlined in this Section

*This section contains detailed instructions for the following activities for which the Ministry of Volunteers Team and task forces have responsibility:*

Activity	Time	Purpose
Orientation for Ministry of Volunteers Team	3½ to 4½ hours	Become familiar with the volunteer ministry program and make plans
Orientation for Task Force Members*	5½ to 6½ hours	Become familiar with the volunteer ministry program and members' responsibilities; make plans
Orientation for Leaders of the Church	2½ hours	Become familiar with the volunteer ministry program and make a list of volunteer ministry positions within the local church, wider church and community
Evaluating the Volunteer Ministry Program	1½ to 2 hours	Evaluate the volunteer ministry program and make plans to strengthen it

Following these meetings, the task forces meet individually for the first time. Additional meetings of the team are to be called by the chairperson as needed. The purpose of those meetings will be to review activities of the volunteer ministry program to date, to learn about plans and progress of the task forces, to coordinate the work of the task forces, and to deal with any problems which may arise. Monthly or bimonthly team meetings of 2 to 2½ hours should be adequate.

\*At this meeting provision is made for planning a congregational event for developing a mission statement. Reference should be made to the booklet "Developing a Mission Statement" for assistance in these activities.

## Coordination of Activities

A suggested sequence of activities for beginning a volunteer ministry program is found on page 31. Each church will have to adapt the schedule to meet its own situation. The major points of coordination include:

1. The orientation for the team must come first, followed by the orientation of the task force members. It is recommended that decisions about recruiting task force members be made during the orientation of the team. If all task force members are selected at the same time the team is appointed, these two orientation meetings could be combined and accomplished during a two-day retreat.
2. The orientation for church leaders should precede the mission statement event so these leaders can assist with interpretation and in encouraging participation at the event.
3. The early meetings of the task forces depend on a completed mission statement of the church.
4. The key to the work of the task forces is having completed ministry position descriptions. The Task Force on Position Descriptions should move as quickly as possible until these position descriptions, or a sizable percentage of them, are complete and ready for use by the other task forces. Once this is done the work of the Task Force on Position Descriptions becomes quite modest.
5. The matching and recruiting steps depend on the completion of the ministry position descriptions and on the volunteer ministry questionnaire's being filled out by all church members.

---

## Planning and Leading Meetings

Suggestions for planning and leading task force 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 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 force 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 share the meeting's objectives 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 force 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 forces dealing with other aspects of the church's volunteer ministry program.
9. The size of the task force affects how the group works together. If the task force is only 4-6, then group work can be done together. If there are more than 4 members, some group assignments could be done in sub-groups. For example, the personal sharing could be done in small groups of 2-3 persons.

---

## Advice to Team Members

The meeting plans which follow are intended for the team and task force chairpersons. It is not necessary for all task force members to have the meeting plans. Many meeting plans have resource sheets that will be valuable for task force members to have. Arrangements should be made to produce copies of these for task force members, if possible. Rights to mimeograph or photocopy this material are hereby granted to local churches which have purchased *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*.

The chairpersons of the Ministry of Volunteers Team and the four task forces need to use wisdom and judgment in making adaptations of the meeting plans. Meeting plans are designed with both large and small churches in mind. However, only you can judge the appropriateness of some of the suggested procedures for your church. Be careful not to discount an idea or procedure because it has never been tried before. While new and demanding activities may seem threaten-

ing, they can be exciting and revitalizing as well.

The chairpersons of the team and the task forces should help persons involved in the volunteer ministry program keep in mind the meaning of ministry, reminding them that ministry is something done by all Christians and not limited to ordained clergy. Task forces should be encouraged to use regularly "A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry" and the principles of the volunteer ministry program found in each component booklet.

One of the important functions of the team chairperson is to support members of the team and task forces as much as possible. It is important that this person maintain regular contact through calls and notes. The team chairperson should make regular reports to the official board and the church about the volunteer ministry program.

## Meeting Plan Format

Each meeting plan contains the following components:

1. **Background and Preparation** tells what steps should be completed prior to the meeting and the preparation the chairperson needs to make.
2. **Objectives of the Meeting** are listed for sharing during the meeting. They should be modified as needed.
3. **Materials Needed** should be carefully reviewed to make certain that all necessary supplies are on hand.
4. **Time Required** provides an overall estimate of time needed for the meeting, including breaks. Minimum times are given and it will require discipline to maintain the schedule.
5. **Overview of the Meeting** highlights the flow of activities and may be referred to in previewing the agenda at the beginning of the meeting.
6. **Detailed Outline of the Meeting** gives a step-by-step plan with approximate times suggested to accomplish the meeting's purpose.

## Suggested Sequence of Activities for Beginning a Volunteer Ministry Program

Month	Ministry of Volunteers Team	Task Force on Position Descriptions	Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting	Task Force on Training	Task Force on Support and Completion
1	Decision to participate Appointment of team and chairperson				
2	Orientation for team Orientation for task forces				
3	Orientation for leaders Mission statement event				
4		First meeting Meeting of church leaders Second meeting	First meeting Development of questionnaire	First meeting	First meeting
5	Coordination meeting	Information gathering	Administering questionnaire	Information gathering	Information gathering
6	Coordination meeting		Third meeting Matching Recruiting	Second meeting	Second meeting
7 thru 11	Coordination meetings (monthly or bi-monthly)	Completion of more position descriptions	Continuation of recruiting Completion of more questionnaires	Training events	Implementation of support and completion plans
12	Evaluation of volunteer ministry program				

## Orientation for the Ministry of Volunteers Team

### Background and Preparation

This meeting plan is based on the structure outlined earlier in this booklet which calls for a Ministry of Volunteers Team and four task forces. This meeting plan is for a team of six persons who have been recruited for specific tasks.

The chairperson of the Ministry of Volunteers Team is responsible for planning and leading the team meetings, facilitating communication between meetings and supporting team members.

Four persons have been recruited to serve on the Ministry of Volunteers Team and to chair the four task forces. These four persons will attend all team meetings, recruit members of their task forces and plan and lead their task force meetings.

The pastor will work closely with the team chairperson in planning and leading team meetings and will be available upon request to assist any of the task force chairpersons.

It is assumed that the official board of the church has appointed the team chairperson and that the four task force chairpersons have been selected very carefully. These persons have been recruited by the team chairperson and invited to the first meeting of the team.

In recruiting persons for the Ministry of Volunteers Team, the chairperson has studied and used materials in this booklet, with particular attention to the five ministry position descriptions for the Ministry of Volunteers Team and task force members (pages 14-23). It is vitally important that persons recruited for the team understand the amount of time they will be investing in this program as each will serve on the team and as chairperson of a task force.

In preparation for the first meeting of the Ministry of Volunteers Team, it is recommended that all team members read the booklet on the volunteer ministry program, "The Church and Its Volunteers" and the section in this booklet, "A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry."

It is recommended that the chairperson of the Ministry of Volunteers Team and the pastor plan and lead the first meeting of the team using the following meeting outline. This orientation session of the team could be led by an outside resource person who is familiar with the volunteer ministry program. Some conferences provide this kind of assistance to local churches. Some conferences are providing training experiences for Ministry of Volunteers Team chairpersons or entire teams from churches involved in the volunteer ministry program.

This orientation session is intended primarily to organize the team for the first time. It can be adapted to orient new Ministry of Volunteers Team members in settings where the volunteer ministry program is an ongoing program in the life of the church.

The leader should be familiar with the volunteer ministry program and prepared to make assignments for the second meeting. If a role play is planned (Step 13), the leader should be prepared to set it up.

This orientation session is very important to the success of the volunteer ministry program and enough time should be allowed to carry it out thoroughly.

Members of the Ministry of Volunteers Team will understand the concept of *volunteer ministry* and what it means for their church.

Members of the Ministry of Volunteers Team will be familiar with the various resources in *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches* and understand how to use it as a resource for their work.

Members of the Ministry of Volunteers Team will understand the basic components of the volunteer ministry program.

The team will clarify its responsibilities and those of the task forces and make plans for recruiting members of the task forces.

The team will make plans for its next meeting, which will include members of the task forces.

**Objectives of the Meeting**

A copy of the following for each team member:

- “A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry” (pages 6-8)
- Components of the Volunteer Ministry Program (page 24)
- Volunteer ministry position descriptions for the Ministry of Volunteers Team and each task force (pages 14-23)

- 2 sets of *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches* (one for the team chairperson and one for the pastor)
- Appropriate booklets for task force chairpersons (See page 34 for a list.)
- Newsprint, markers and masking tape
- Light refreshments (optional)

**Materials Needed**

3½ to 4½ hours

The following meeting outline contains some guidelines about time needed for each step. The total working time includes two brief breaks. There are several possibilities for conducting this

meeting: the team could complete the planned outline in one long meeting; it could plan a meal in place of the second break; or it could have 2-hour meetings on two consecutive evenings.

**Time Required**

- Welcome, objectives, agenda
- Theological reflection and personal sharing
- Overview of *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*
- Study of the components

- Review of volunteer ministry position descriptions
- Identification of task force members and planning for recruitment
- Reflection on meeting and worship

**Overview of the Meeting**

**1**

The team chairperson welcomes team members, expresses appreciation for

their commitment, shares the objectives of the meeting and previews the agenda. (5 minutes)

**Detailed Outline of the Meeting**

# Orientation for Team

---

**2**  
 Persons are asked to reflect on an experience in which someone ministered to them, and an experience in which they ministered to someone. After thinking about this for a few minutes, each person is asked to share one or both of the experiences. (15-20 minutes)

---

**3**  
 The group discusses what made these experiences *ministry* and where ministry happens. The chairperson records responses on newsprint. (5-10 minutes)

---

**4**  
 The chairperson or pastor summarizes material from the booklets to introduce the concepts of *ministry*, *volunteer ministry*, and *volunteer ministry program*. Definitions or explanations of these terms are written on newsprint. The team then compares and contrasts its understanding of ministry (Step 3) with the material from the presentation. (10-15 minutes)

---

**5**  
 The chairperson briefly shares the steps taken and decisions made which have led to the formation of the team. The chairperson shares the resources which will be available to the team as it goes about its work. (10 minutes)

---

**6**  
 The chairperson focuses the team's attention on the components of the volunteer ministry program and provides each person with a copy of "Components of the Volunteer Ministry Program" (page 24). The chairperson provides a brief introduction to each component and then assigns the components to individuals for further study as follows:

<b>Booklet from the Series</b>	<b>Component</b>	<b>Assigned To</b>
Developing a Mission Statement	mission statement	pastor
Volunteers and Volunteer Ministries (Part II)	volunteer ministry position descriptions	task force chairperson
Volunteers and Volunteer Ministries (Part III)	identifying matching recruiting	task force chairperson
Training Volunteers	training	task force chairperson
Supporting Volunteers and Completing Volunteer Ministries	supporting completing	task force chairperson
Guiding the Church's Volunteer Ministry Program	evaluation	team chairperson

Each person is asked to study the assigned materials, identify any questions or issues which the component

raises for the team and prepare to explain the component and what is involved for the team. (20 minutes)

---

## 7

Break. (10 minutes)

---

## 8

Individual study time for assignment given in Step 6. (20 minutes)

---

## 9

Each person reports on his or her component assignment, highlighting

main points and placing these on newsprint. The team clarifies the report and deals with any questions or issues raised. (35 minutes)

---

## 10

Break (5-10 minutes) or meal.

---

## 11

The chairperson reviews the volunteer ministry position description for a team member. The team discusses the position description and makes any necessary changes or adaptations.

The four task force position descriptions are reviewed and revised. It is hoped the team will adapt the descriptions to the needs and characteristics of their church. During the next meeting with members of the task forces there will be an opportunity to review the position descriptions again and make additional changes. (20-30 minutes)

---

## 12

The team determines how many persons are needed on each task force. The four task forces are listed on

newsprint and the team develops a list of potential members for each task force. The names are then arranged in the order that persons will be contacted to serve. (15-20 minutes)

---

## 13

The team chairperson leads a discussion of how the task force chairpersons will recruit members for their task forces and when it will be done.

It is recommended that the recruitment be done in a face-to-face conversation

and that the ministry position descriptions be used to interpret the task to the persons being recruited.

The task force chairpersons might practice making a recruitment call by role-playing the situation. (15-25 minutes)

## 14

The chairperson previews the next Ministry of Volunteers Team meeting

which will include task force members and makes assignments for leadership at that meeting. The time and place for the meeting are set. (15-20 minutes)

---

## 15

The chairperson or pastor leads the group in reflection on the work of the team as ministry. Team members share

their feelings about the meeting and about the volunteer ministry program which they are to implement. (5-10 minutes)

---

## 16

The chairperson or pastor leads in closing worship. Bible passages and ideas from the section in this booklet "A Biblical and Theological Perspective on

Volunteer Ministry" can be shared. The meeting is closed with prayers for the church and its mission, the Ministry of Volunteers Team and the work ahead. (5-10 minutes)

---

## Orientation for the Task Force Members

### Background and Preparation

This meeting plan is based on the structure outlined earlier in this booklet which calls for a Ministry of Volunteers Team and four task forces, and presumes the Orientation for the Ministry of Volunteers Team has been completed. Task force chairpersons have recruited persons to serve on their task forces.

In preparation for this meeting it is recommended that task force members be provided with a copy of the ministry position description for their task force. This would normally be provided at the time of recruitment.

The Ministry of Volunteers Team chairperson will plan and lead this meeting. There are leadership roles for the pastor

and each task force chairperson. This meeting could be led by an outside resource person who is familiar with the volunteer ministry program. Some conferences provide this kind of assistance to local churches. Some conferences provide training experiences for Ministry of Volunteers Teams and task force members from churches engaged in this volunteer ministry program.

This orientation session is intended primarily for orienting task force members serving for the first time. It can be adapted to orient new task force members in settings where the volunteer ministry program is an ongoing program in the life of the church.

---

### Objectives of the Meeting

Task force members will understand the concept of *volunteer ministry* and what it means for their church.

Task force members will understand the basic components of the volunteer ministry program.

Task force members will understand the responsibility of their task force and become familiar with the booklet which pertains to the work of their task force.

The group will complete plans for the orientation for leaders of the church.

Task forces will make plans for their next meeting.

Ministry of Volunteers Team chairperson and pastor need the following:

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

Task force chairpersons need the following:

- Instructions for Step 5
- Booklet(s) appropriate to the work of their particular task force
- List of task force activities

Task force members need the following:

- Ministry position descriptions appropriate to their particular task force (pages 14-23)
- Components of the Volunteer Ministry Program (page 24)
- Booklet appropriate to the work of their particular task force (optional)
- Newsprint, markers and masking tape
- Meal

**Materials Needed**

5½ to 6½ hours

The following outline for the task force orientation session contains time guidelines necessary for each step. It is recommended that this be a morning and afternoon meeting, or an afternoon and evening meeting, with a meal provided. The design calls for a total working time of 5½ to 6½ hours including 45 minutes for a meal and two brief breaks. An alternative would be to

have two meetings of approximately 2½ hours each. If this is done it is recommended that the two meetings be held close together, such as on two consecutive evenings. The first meeting would cover Steps 1-6 and the second meeting Steps 8-15. This orientation is crucial to the success of the volunteer ministry program and enough time should be allowed to complete the work thoroughly.

**Time Required**

- Welcome, objectives, agenda
- Personal sharing and theological reflection
- Study of their material by task forces
- Review of volunteer ministry position descriptions

- Development of schedule of meetings and activities
- Planning for meeting of congregational leaders
- Commitment, support, covenanting together
- Worship

**Overview of the Meeting**

**1**

The Ministry of Volunteers Team chairperson welcomes the members,

expresses appreciation for their commitment to serve, shares the objectives for the meeting and previews the agenda. (5 minutes)

**Detailed Outline of the Meeting**

## Orientation for Task Force Members

---

### 2

Each team member shares one aspect of the volunteer ministry program which excites him or her.

Each task force member shares his or her experience of being recruited for the task force and why he or she agreed to serve. (15 minutes)

---

### 3

The team chairperson or pastor presents an overview of the volunteer ministry program and the material from "Section One: A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry," which explains the meaning of *ministry*, *volunteer ministry* and the *volunteer ministry program*.

The definitions of these terms are placed on newsprint and the work of the task forces is interpreted as ministry and as facilitating the ministry of others in the church.

There is discussion to insure everyone is clear about these meanings. (10-15 minutes)

---

### 4

The team chairperson focuses the group's attention on the components of the volunteer ministry program and provides each person with a copy of

"Components of the Volunteer Ministry Program" (page 24).

The chairperson provides a brief introduction to each component or each task force chairperson introduces his or her component. (10 minutes)

---

### 5

The four task forces meet separately. Each task force sub-group meeting is led by the task force chairperson. Each task force follows Steps a-e.

- a. If each member does not have a copy of the booklet(s) pertaining to his or her task force's particular component of the volunteer ministry program, the chairperson presents the material from the principles section of the booklet(s). If members have copies of the booklet(s), time is provided for reading the principles section. (10 minutes)
- b. The task force chairperson leads a discussion of the principles until everyone understands and is comfortable with the principles of the task force's part of a volunteer ministry program. (20-30 minutes)
- c. The task force chairperson presents material from "A Biblical and Theo-

logical Perspective on Volunteer Ministry" (pages 6-8) that he or she feels provides a foundation for the work of the task force. The group discusses the material. (10-20 minutes)

- d. The task force chairperson leads a review and discussion of the work of the task force. The outline of meetings and activities should be placed on newsprint. (35-40 minutes)
- e. The task force identifies any questions or issues it needs to raise with the Ministry of Volunteers Team or another task force when the total group reconvenes. (5-10 minutes)

Each group should take a 10-minute break during its meeting, as needed.

While the four task forces are meeting, the team chairperson and the pastor study "Developing a Mission Statement," a booklet in this series, and make plans for implementing this component.

**6**

The total group reconvenes and each task force briefly reports its work and deals with any issues or questions which arose. (20 minutes)

**7**

Meal break. (45 minutes)

**8**

Each task force meets separately to study its ministry position description and to propose any changes which need to be made. (20 minutes)

**9**

The total group reconvenes and each task force reports any proposed changes in its ministry position description. These changes are discussed and

negotiated by the total group. The group should insure that the ministry position descriptions are consistent among the four task forces. (15 minutes)

**10**

Each task force meets to develop a plan of action, schedule its activities and meetings and identify who will be involved.

While the task forces are meeting the team chairperson and the pastor complete work on mission statement plans. (25-30 minutes)

**11**

Break. (10 minutes)

**12**

The total group reconvenes. The chairperson and pastor share plans for developing the mission statement of the church. These are discussed, any neces-

sary changes made and consensus reached.

Each task force reports its plans. A master schedule is created with information recorded on newsprint as follows:

Activity	Date, Time, Place	Leadership	Persons Involved	Purpose

(25-35 minutes)

## 13

The team chairperson previews plans for the meeting to orient leaders of the church to the volunteer ministry program. The group decides who will be

invited to the orientation meeting and when and where it will be held. Assignments are made for inviting persons to the meeting and for leadership responsibilities at the meeting. (20-25 minutes)

---

## 14

The team chairperson and pastor lead the group in reflection on the meeting and tell of their commitment to the volunteer ministry program.

Each person is asked to write one sentence expressing his or her commit-

ment to the volunteer ministry program and one sentence indicating the support he or she will need in order to follow through on that commitment. These are written down and persons covenant together to provide the needed support for one another. (15 minutes)

---

## 15

The team chairperson or pastor leads in closing worship. Bible passages and

ideas from "Section One: A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry" may be shared. The meeting is closed with prayer. (5 minutes)

---

## Orientation for Leaders of the Church

### Background and Preparation

This meeting plan is based on the structure outlined earlier in this booklet which calls for a Ministry of Volunteers Team and four task forces, and presumes that the orientation for the Ministry of Volunteers Team and orientation for the task force members have taken place.

Leaders of the church have been identified and invited to this meeting. This includes members of the official board, chairpersons of committees and task forces, officers of organizations and groups. At least one representative from each committee or organization of the church, including the church school and music program, should be present for this meeting.

The Ministry of Volunteers Team and the four task forces will be present at this meeting.

The Ministry of Volunteers Team chairperson will plan and lead this meeting, with the pastor and members of the team and task forces sharing in the leadership, including the presentations in Steps 4 and 6.

This meeting plan is intended for use by a church beginning a volunteer ministry program. Once the program has been in operation, elements of the design could be used each year to orient new leaders of church groups to the volunteer ministry program.

Leaders of the church will understand the concept of *volunteer ministry* and what it means for them and their church group or organization.

Leaders of the church will understand the volunteer ministry program, and will be familiar with the activities and sched-

ule planned by the Ministry of Volunteers Team.

A list of volunteer ministry positions within the church, wider church, and community will be developed for use by the Ministry of Volunteers Team and task forces.

### Objectives of the Meeting

- A copy of "Components of the Volunteer Ministry Program" (page 24) for each person (or a list of components on newsprint)
- Newsprint, markers and masking tape
- Master calendar of planned events on newsprint

- "A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry" (pages 6-8) for the leader
- Task force activities planned at last meeting on newsprint
- Worship resources (See Step 11 for suggestions.)
- Light refreshments (optional)

### Materials Needed

2½ hours

### Time Required

- Welcome, objectives, agenda
- Personal sharing and theological reflection
- Presentation of components and plans for the Ministry of Volunteers Team and task forces

- Evaluation of plans
- Development of list of volunteer ministry positions
- Reflection, commitment and worship

### Overview of the Meeting

**1**  
 The team chairperson welcomes participants to the meeting, expresses appreci-

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

### Detailed Outline of the Meeting

**2**  
 Persons are divided into small groups of 3-4 persons and asked to share responses to the question:

What gives you the most satisfaction in your present leadership or volunteer task in the church? (10 minutes)

**3**  
 In the same small groups persons are asked to develop a definition of *ministry* and share how what they do as

volunteers in the church can be understood as ministry.

Each group writes a brief definition of ministry on newsprint to be shared with the total group. (10 minutes)

**4**

The total group reconvenes and each group shares its definition of ministry.

The team chairperson or pastor makes a brief presentation on the meaning of *volunteer ministry* and *the Church as the Body of Christ* using material from

“Section One: A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry.”

The presentation should refer to ministry within the local church, the wider church and the community.

The group compares and contrasts the definitions of ministry developed in Step 3 with the presentation. (10 minutes)

---

**5**

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

The team chairperson introduces components of the volunteer ministry pro-

gram, using the list of components which everyone has or which has been placed on newsprint.

In groups of 4-6, persons share which of the components they think the church presently does well and which need to be strengthened. These are shared briefly in the total group. (20 minutes)

---

**6**

The team chairperson shares plans for developing a mission statement for the church and tells how church groups will be asked to participate in those plans.

Each task force makes a 5-minute presentation giving the purpose of the

task force; activities planned, with dates; the kind of support and assistance it can provide congregational groups; and the kind of support and assistance it needs from the church. It will be helpful if the task forces have outlined their plans on newsprint and have a master calendar which notes activities and dates set. (30 minutes)

---

**7**

Break. (10 minutes)

---

**8**

Each member of the team or task force meets with a small group of 4-6 persons. Each group discusses plans presented from the following perspectives:

a. What is liked about the plans?

b. What problems, issues or questions are raised by the plans which need to be addressed by the total group, team or a task force?

c. What will be expected of the group leader and is this feasible? (15 minutes)

---

**9**

The total group reconvenes and each small group reports.

The reports are recorded on newsprint and responses are divided in the categories identified in Step 8.

Problems are discussed and decisions made about them, or they are referred to the team or appropriate task force. (15 minutes)

## 10

The team chairperson introduces the concept of *ministry positions* and presents three newsprint sheets each with one of these headings:

In the Local Church  
In the Wider Church  
In the Community

The chairperson indicates that it is essential to have a complete list of volunteer ministry positions for use by

the task forces early in the volunteer ministry program.

The group first identifies ministry positions represented by them within the church and these are recorded on newsprint. The group then identifies additional ministry positions within any of the three categories and these are recorded on newsprint.

When this is complete, the chairperson indicates this is valuable information for the task forces. (15 minutes)

## 11

The team chairperson or pastor leads worship, providing a way for members of the group to affirm their activities in the church as ministry, to renew their commitment to that ministry and to express their support for the team and task forces and their intention to cooperate with the projected plans.

Suggested worship resources: hymns, Scripture, ideas from "Section One: A Biblical and Theological Perspective on Volunteer Ministry" and prayers. The group develops a litany in which the team, task forces and major planned activities are named and the group responds "We affirm this ministry and pledge our support."

The team chairperson thanks the participants for their attendance and participation in the meeting. (10 minutes)

## Evaluating the Volunteer Ministry Program

This meeting plan is based on the structure outlined earlier in this booklet which calls for a Ministry of Volunteers Team and four task forces. In this plan the responsibility for evaluating the volunteer ministry program is assigned to the Ministry of Volunteers Team. However, this meeting plan can be easily adapted for use by another group given this responsibility.

This meeting plan assumes that the volunteer ministry program has been operating for at least one year. The

meeting plan can be repeated annually to keep the program vital and healthy.

As many persons as possible who have been involved in the church's volunteer ministry program should be invited to this meeting. Everyone who has been related to one of the task groups working on any aspect of the volunteer ministry program should be present.

The "Checklist for Evaluating the Volunteer Ministry Program" should be studied and the necessary changes made so it is applicable to the church's volunteer ministry program.

### Background and Preparation

# Evaluating

---

## Objectives of the Meeting

All aspects of the volunteer ministry program will be reviewed and judgments made about their effectiveness.

Plans will be made for improving or strengthening the volunteer ministry program or selected aspects of it.

---

## Materials Needed

- A copy of the "Checklist for Evaluating the Volunteer Ministry Program" (pages 46-49) for each person attending the meeting (adapted as needed)

- Newsprint, markers and masking tape
  - Pen or pencil for each participant
- 

## Time Required

1½ to 2 hours

---

## Overview of the Meeting

- Welcome, objectives, agenda
- Personal sharing
- Review and identification of strengths
- Completion and sharing of responses to the "Checklist for Evaluating the Volunteer Ministry Program"

- Development of plans for strengthening selected parts of the volunteer ministry program
  - Summary and worship
- 

## Detailed Outline of the Meeting

**1**  
The leader of the meeting welcomes participants to the meeting, expresses

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

---

**2**  
Persons are invited to introduce themselves and to share their involvement in the volunteer ministry program during the past year. (15 minutes)

---

**3**  
The leader of the meeting reviews the meaning of *ministry* and *volunteer ministry* which have been used during the year and summarizes how the volunteer ministry program has been organized.

Persons are asked to call out ways they feel the church's ministry has been strengthened because of the volunteer ministry program. The leader writes the responses on newsprint. (10 minutes)

---

**4**  
Everyone is given a copy of the "Checklist for Evaluating the Volunteer

Ministry Program." Time is provided for the checklist to be completed. (10 minutes)

---

## 5

There are several options for sharing the responses on the checklists and developing plans for needed work:

- a. The leader has a copy of the checklist written on newsprint. The leader quickly surveys the number of persons who responded with “satisfactory” and the number who responded with “needs work” for each item and records the totals on the newsprint.  
  
In the total group or in small groups, plans are developed for strengthening each of the items where there is a clear need for improvement.
- b. Small groups of 4-6 persons gather and share responses to each item on the checklist. They then identify the three or four items that need the most work and propose one or two ways to strengthen them. The total group reconvenes and each small group reports its proposals. Decisions and assignments for follow-up are made.
- c. Small groups of 4-6 persons are each assigned one or more of the components of the volunteer ministry program. Members of each small group share their responses on the checklist and make plans for strengthening the church’s work on the component(s) assigned the small group. Each small group then reports its plans to the total group. (40-70 minutes)

## 6

The leader of the meeting summarizes the decisions and assignments made during the meeting; thanks the participants for their work; and leads worship,

providing a way for members of the group to express their gratitude for the church and its ministry and to renew their commitment to that ministry. (10 minutes)

## Checklist for Evaluating the Volunteer Ministry Program

		Satisfactory	Needs Work
<b>Church's Mission Statement</b>	The church's mission statement is current and is providing guidance for the volunteer ministry program	_____	_____
	<hr/>		
<b>Volunteer Ministry Position Descriptions</b>	All volunteer ministry positions in the church have been identified	_____	_____
	Position descriptions have been written for all volunteer ministries in the church	_____	_____
	Each ministry position description is on file in a central location	_____	_____
	Each ministry position description has been evaluated for accuracy and clarity and the necessary changes made	_____	_____
<hr/>			
<b>Volunteer Identification, Matching and Recruitment</b>	Volunteer Ministry Questionnaires were used and were an effective tool in the volunteer ministry program	_____	_____
	The following changes need to be made in the questionnaire:		
	The steps of identifying, matching and recruiting are well organized and effective	_____	_____
	The involvement and effectiveness of volunteers have increased because of careful matching	_____	_____

	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Needs Work</b>	
Personal information cards have been completed for each church member	_____	_____	<b>Personal Information Cards</b>
Personal information cards have been updated to include the most recent volunteer ministry	_____	_____	
Personal information cards have been completed for new church members	_____	_____	
<hr/>			
Ministry position cards have been completed for each volunteer ministry in:			<b>Ministry Position Cards</b>
The local church	_____	_____	
The conference and denomination	_____	_____	
Ecumenical agencies and groups	_____	_____	
Community agencies and groups	_____	_____	
New members of the church have been considered for volunteer ministry positions	_____	_____	
<hr/>			
Training opportunities have been provided for:			<b>Training Volunteers</b>
Orientation to ministry positions	_____	_____	
On-the-ministry training	_____	_____	
Continuing education	_____	_____	
Training opportunities are needed in the following areas:			
 The most effective training opportunities have been:			
 The volunteer ministry program has been strengthened because of new efforts in training	_____	_____	

# Checklist

		Satisfactory	Needs Work
<b>Supporting Volunteers</b>	The volunteer ministry program has been strengthened because of more adequate support being given volunteers	_____	_____
	Resources and facilities have been adequate for effective volunteer ministry	_____	_____
	Additional resources which are needed have been identified and plans made to secure them	_____	_____
<b>Recognition of Volunteers</b>	Volunteers have been adequately recognized by the church for their ministries in the:		
	Local church	_____	_____
	Wider church	_____	_____
	Community	_____	_____
	The most effective types of recognition have been:		
Recognition of volunteers needs improvement in the following ways:			
<b>Completing Volunteer Ministries</b>	Each volunteer has filled out the report and evaluation form at the completion of service	_____	_____
	The group working on closure activities has met and interviewed:		
	Committees and groups prior to their final meeting of the year	_____	_____
	Volunteers within the church at the completion of their ministries	_____	_____
Volunteers involved in wider church and community ministries at the completion of their ministries	_____	_____	

	Satisfactory	Needs Work	
Task forces working on different components of the volunteer ministry program have been an effective way to implement the church's volunteer ministry program	_____	_____	<b>Guiding the Volunteer Ministry Program</b>
If appropriate:			
The administrative system of the team and four task forces has worked well	_____	_____	
The team and task forces have felt supported by the congregation	_____	_____	
Plans for integrating new persons into the team and task forces are being made	_____	_____	
Overall the following could be said in evaluation of the volunteer ministry program:			

---

# Section Four: Three Experiences with the Volunteer Ministry Program

---

This section contains descriptions of how three churches might have used and adapted *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*. They are offered as models—examples or case studies—to provide an overview of how the program can be developed. In each case, the church modified some procedures of the program in order to tailor-make it for their own unique situation. This kind of creativity is encouraged.

The first description comes from Central Church, a congregation of 300-400 members in a small town. Central Church has an official board called a church council, a moderator, a full-time pastor and the usual array of church committees.

The second description comes from an individual deeply involved in his church's experience in beginning the volunteer ministry program. His story is told from the perspective of the chairperson of the Ministry of Volunteers Team at the end of the first year of the program. A

realistic picture of the amount of time and energy involved in giving leadership to the volunteer ministry program is presented.

The third description is from the diary kept by the pastor of a 73-member church in a small, rural community. It reveals the ability of this congregation to adapt and modify the program to make it work for them.

The Office for Church Life and Leadership is eager to hear about your experience with *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches*. What worked for you? What creative adaptations did you make and what were the results? What suggestions do you have for improving this resource for congregations of the United Church of Christ? We would like to hear from you. Send a description of your experience to:

Office for Church Life and Leadership  
P.O. Box 179  
St. Louis, Missouri 63166

---

## **One Church's Experience with the Volunteer Ministry Program**

### **The Setting**

Central Church is a congregation of 300-400 members located in Centerville, a town with a population of 10,000. Central Church is at the edge of the

downtown area with some of the town's oldest and largest homes on the north and east. The business district begins one block to the south.

The membership of Central Church has been relatively stable over the past four years. In the previous decade it had declined by fifty percent. Most of the members are 45-65, but there are an increasing number of younger families with children beginning to participate in the church's life. Several of the younger people have assumed major leadership roles over the past eighteen months.

The chief elected officer of Central Church is the moderator. The moderator is the symbolic leader of the church, a major support for the pastor and is the chairperson of the church council.

The council is the governing board of the church and is responsible for managing the financial life of the church and for coordinating its program. Programs originate in the church committees (Deacons, Christian Education, Music, Mission, Outreach, Social Action, Trustees, Fellowship, Youth) and from the pastor. The council membership includes the chairperson of each church committee, five members at large, the moderator, the treasurer and the pastor. Nominations are developed by a task force of the council, appointed in September of each year.

The Reverend Mr. John Tobias was called as pastor of Central Church a little more than a year ago. In calling Mr. Tobias, the church identified two priority areas in which developmental work needed to be done. Their primary goal was growth in church membership, especially through reactivating members who had become peripheral in the life of the church. Their secondary goal was leadership development. There was concern about the increasing difficulty in filling leadership "slots" in committees and other areas in the church's life and about the tendency of persons to remain in office for many years. Some persons did this out of a sense of duty or entrapment. Others enjoyed the work and liked being in influential positions.

During his first year at Central Church, Mr. Tobias was instrumental in introducing a program of membership development. The Central Church Outreach Committee worked hard in designing a program and setting it into motion. They worked with the assistance of a consultant using a process from a commercial organization as the core of the program. There is good feeling about the program in the congregation. Some modest results are beginning to show. Five new families have been received into membership and a

number of faces are reappearing regularly after some years of absence. That program will continue for two more years.

Leadership development was on the agenda at a council meeting at the beginning of the second year of Mr. Tobias' pastorate. Council members agreed to address this issue as a priority item this year and the moderator had obtained a copy of *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches* for each council member. They had been introduced to it by the moderator. Both he and the pastor felt the process outlined in the guidebook would be an effective way to work on leadership development in Central Church. One and one-half hours were reserved for the discussion. Mr. Tobias and the moderator developed a plan for introducing the program, using ideas from the orientation of the Ministry of Volunteer Team as a framework, and adding steps which would enable the council to make a decision about whether or not to use the process described in the guidebook.

The council was receptive to the ideas outlined by the pastor and moderator. Some questioned the amount of effort and time it would take, but all were willing to give it a try.

## The Situation

### **The Situation (continued)**

Two members of the council, Mr. Long and Ms. Jackson, were enthusiastic about the volunteer ministry program and indicated a willingness to be involved if and when the program was undertaken. By the end of the meeting the council was ready to support the

venture and voted "to begin a program of volunteer ministry development for next year." They authorized the pastor, moderator, Mr. Long and Ms. Jackson from the council to recruit persons for the Ministry of Volunteers Team.

### **The Process**

Selecting the Ministry of Volunteers Team was a key step in the process. The sub-committee knew that without strong leaders with firm commitment in these positions there would be no program. The Ministry of Volunteers Team was to consist of seven persons: persons to chair each task force (Task Force on Position Descriptions; Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting; Task Force on Training; and Task Force on Support and Completion); a chairperson to manage the whole program; the moderator; and the pastor. Task forces would be formed as suggested in the guidebook. Care was taken to include persons from across the life of Central Church and especially

to tap some of the new leadership in existing committees.

Persons invited to assume leadership positions were asked to reserve the Tuesday evening after Easter for orientation and planning. They were also told that the final roster of nominees would be submitted to the council for acceptance and a vote of support. It was decided that the program would not be mentioned to the congregation until after the team had met and developed a plan and timeline for the volunteer ministry program.

### **Step 1: Mission Clarification**

Easter was on March 26. The Ministry of Volunteers Team held its initial meeting on Tuesday evening following Easter. Ms. Jackson had agreed to be chairperson of the team and led the session, using materials from the guidebook.

By the end of the evening the team had a sense of who they were and had mapped out a general plan for the program for two years and were ready to recruit task force members. By the following January they intended to have completed all position descriptions, to have matched and recruited persons for those positions and to be prepared to submit their names in nomination to the Annual Meeting. In addition, plans for training and support would be developed for implementation then. Some earlier "events" would be held as a taste of what was to come.

Two weeks later the team and all the task force members gathered and worked on further plans. The task forces spent a good portion of that meeting working on their own plans. At the same time the chairperson, moderator and pastor began to work on the design for the all-church dinner which was being held April 23 following worship to introduce the volunteer ministry program and to develop a statement expressing the congregation's understanding of its mission. The team agreed it was important to begin with existing covenants and a statement of faith with which the church was familiar. They decided to focus on the Salem Covenant, the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith and the preamble to the Central Church constitution.

April 23 was a good experience, but fewer people attended than they had hoped for. The Ministry of Volunteers Team met following the session and decided to request five minutes during the after-worship coffee hour every Sunday for the next month to introduce

and review the volunteer ministry program and to share the results of the congregational meeting. Displays would be exhibited in the fellowship hall each week and a variety of ways designed for additional sharing with the congregation.

---

The Task Force on Position Descriptions spent the rest of April, May and June developing the position descriptions. They intended to complete their work before the "summer slow-down" so that the recruitment process could begin in September. The meeting with church leaders to write position descriptions was held in late May and received favorable response from the participants. Eighty-five percent of the committees and organizations of Central Church were represented and position descriptions were completed for these groups. The task force scheduled individual contacts with the remaining groups between June 1 and June 15 to complete its work.

The task force was not as successful in developing position descriptions for ministries beyond Central Church. There

was some resistance in the task force to taking the time at this juncture. Others insisted it was an important dimension of the program. The task force finally identified five agencies in the community which would be approached by June 30. Position descriptions would be developed in cooperation with these agencies to use in the fall. In addition, the task force agreed to commit itself to work between October and May on identifying as many community agencies as possible with whom to explore and develop position descriptions for use in the Central Church volunteer ministry program. It also decided to invite other churches in Centerville to work on this segment with the task force so they could offer similar opportunities to their members.

### **Step 2: Position Descriptions**

During this same period, the Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting began its work. Recognizing that its task was large and time-consuming, the task force decided to invite three retired persons in Central Church to be a "mini-force" responsible for maintaining updated and orderly records. That allowed the task force to work on the dynamics of identifying potential volunteers in the congregation. Using a shortened form of the Sample Volunteer Ministry Questionnaire, the task force worked through the spring and summer developing the volunteer pool. By mid-August, seventy-five percent of the church members had returned completed questionnaires

and the task force was planning to approach as many more members as they could by September 1. Meanwhile they were ready to begin matching on October 1, when the Task Force on Position Descriptions was to meet with them. The task force members found the task to be long and hard but by its end they were exhilarated by the results, especially at the effective organizing the mini-force was able to do for them.

### **Step 3: Identifying Potential Volunteers**

### **Step 4: Matching and Recruiting**

October 1-15 was matching time. The Task Force on Position Descriptions and the Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting had blocked out three evenings for the task. They met on the first and shared the work that had been done. With the careful work of the mini-force in hand, they found it relatively easy to move through the matching process. By the end of the first evening they had completed most of their work and had to meet only one more time to finish up and lay the groundwork for the recruitment phase.

Recruitment was not easy. The careful advance work was very important and helpful, but it did not guarantee that people would say "yes." What it did do was make the persons doing the recruiting clear about why they were talking to each potential volunteer. People still had many demands

on their time and energy and still had to make choices about where they would invest their personal resources. But with careful advance work, the recruiters were equipped to compete with other demands and to help people with the larger issue of ministry: "How can I best use my personal resources in faithfulness?"

The people were genuinely interested when the recruiter spoke of "in the world" options. They had not thought of these options as ministries before, nor had the options been presented to them in this manner. Some persons decided to volunteer in a variety of settings in the community. This encouraged the recruiters and strengthened the commitment of the Task Force on Position Descriptions to complete its work in this area by next spring.

### **Step 5: Training**

The Task Force on Training decided to interview individual committees to discover what kind of training would be valuable. Based on these meetings the task force decided what kind of training experiences needed to be done on a church-wide basis and what needed to be done "in committee." They assigned a task force member to each committee with responsibility for obtaining information from the committee, "recruiting" the committee's participation in any all-church training and helping the committee design and implement its own training plans.

The Task Force on Training began its work in September. By January all plans were made, orientation sessions were projected for the two weeks following the annual meeting and a year-long training schedule outlined. The schedule called for two all-church training events—one in the spring and one in the fall—plus thirty minutes of training at the beginning of at least four regular meetings of each committee or board in the course of the year.

### **Step 6: Support and Completion**

The Task Force on Support and Completion worked in October and November planning the support program. Plans were made to recognize volunteer ministries completed during the first half of the year at the June mid-point. A "Rally of Volunteers" was planned for the second Sunday in September to celebrate the ministries beginning anew, to outline the second

cycle already in progress and offer all of these persons and their ministries to God with thanksgiving and praise. The "Rally of Volunteers" celebration began with the morning worship service and concluded with an all-church banquet—complete with candles and fancy tablecloths—a fitting way to say "Amen" to the year.

Where does all this leave Central Church? The year was not without frustration and nerves sometimes became frayed. Some people did not follow through on their assignments and others were not sure they wanted to be that serious about church business! By the end of the year Central Church had a greater sense

of knowing who it was and what it was doing. There was a higher sense of excitement about Central Church. On the surface at least, there is better feeling about the ministries being done. For a little more than one year, that is not too bad!

### Reflection

## One Person's Experience with the Volunteer Ministry Program

A member of a local church was asked by the Office for Church Life and Leadership to talk about his experience with the volunteer ministry program. He was chairperson of the Ministry of Volunteers Team when his church began the program.

At the conclusion of the first year of the program he sat down and recorded his learnings and impressions for the Office for Church Life and Leadership. His words are shared here to provide an overview of how the program works and what can result from it.

A little more than a year ago, the pastor of our church gave me *The Ministry of Volunteers: A Guidebook for Churches* to read. The only thing she said was, "Read it, and when you're finished (and she suggested that I finish it by the end of the week), I want to talk with you about it." I said okay.

I put off reading it, and one evening just sat down and went through the whole thing. The good Reverend really didn't tell me what it was about and I was taken by surprise. I didn't think that anybody thought we should run a church that way. Don't get me wrong. I think it's a good idea. I just did not think anybody thought about it in quite the way that the guidebook did.

When the pastor and I talked, I told her that I thought it made sense. She said she was presenting the idea to the Church Council in a couple of weeks and asked if I would be interested in being the chairperson of the Ministry of

Volunteers Team. I told her I would give her an answer later. After about two days I said yes.

The Church Council asked me to serve as chairperson. I thought they would, because the pastor was going to suggest it. I'd done a lot of thinking about who needed to be on the Ministry of Volunteers Team and discovered that the council had done the same thing. At any rate, I was very comfortable with their suggestions and went ahead and made the contacts.

The first meeting of the Ministry of Volunteers Team and the members of its task forces was a weekend retreat. In essence, we took the first two sessions and did them on a Friday night through Saturday afternoon, taking a little longer than was suggested in the guidebook.

### Preliminary Activities

### **Preliminary Activities (continued)**

It was a good experience. We followed the step-by-step procedure in the guidebook and discovered that people just enjoyed talking a lot. By the end of our time together, we had a pretty good sense of our strategy for the coming year with dates all figured out.

We invited all members of the Church Council and chairpersons of other groups of our church to a meeting in which we described our plans and explained why we were going about it. Again, we followed the outline we found in the guidebook pretty closely and it was helpful. By the end of that meeting,

everybody understood what we were planning to do. One person said that it was a lot of wasted effort, but there was a pretty strong feeling that it was a good idea and if our committee wanted to work at it, all would do their best to cooperate. As a matter of fact, looking back on it, people did cooperate and that is what helped make the program a success.

I attended (of course, I asked permission) enough of the meetings of all the task forces so I had a pretty good idea of what happened.

---

### **Task Forces on Identifying Matching and Recruiting and on Position Descriptions**

At the first meeting of the Task Force on Identifying, Matching and Recruiting, I remember we all filled out those forms which asked questions about what we preferred, what our interests were and the like. It was really intriguing to discover how, when we reviewed the principles in the guidebook, a lot of that information seemed useful. This was especially true when we practiced interpreting each other's questionnaires. It is almost funny how some of us started thinking we were experts in what we were doing. It was a good feeling to have a sense that we knew what we were doing. By the end of the first meeting we had made some decisions as to how to modify the forms. Frankly, they were not major modifications. We just thought we would put some things in a different order. We also were able to outline our next meeting plans.

That task force had two additional meetings. I did not get to them, but I heard they were pretty good. People had a chance to set up an information system about the interests and backgrounds of members of our church. They practiced recruitment and set up a schedule to meet with people throughout the church.

It's interesting that even though that task force had hoped to reach every member of the church, the fact is that

they reached nearly three-fourths of the members. That is something we had not done even with our every-member canvass. I think we reached that high a percentage because people doing the visiting (we chose to visit in homes) enjoyed administering the questionnaires and knew they were not talking about money.

There is another reason, and I need to backtrack a bit to explain something else which happened that was very important to us.

You recall the guidebook suggested that we have a meeting of the church to work on a mission statement. Well, that happened before people were visited to fill out the questionnaire. The spirit that was generated at the meeting which we held on a late Sunday afternoon, the first Sunday after the Super Bowl, was thrilling! I have been at meetings of small groups where we have talked about what we believe about the church and they were good. But I have never been in a meeting this large (we had nearly eighty-five people) where so many of us talked about what we thought the purpose of the church was. We were not bickering about programs, boilers or anything like that. We were really talking about some pretty deep things. I think the fact that we had that meeting before we made the visits

helped make the visits as successful as they were in getting those questionnaires filled out. I think it even helped our recruitment visits.

I do not have to tell you that it was a lot of work for the task force to sit down and do what was called "matching," but one of the comments Mary made to me (she is a part of that task force) was that that was one of the first times she had ever been a part of a committee which took the members of the church as seriously as they did. Mind you, they were talking about ministries, which is something we hadn't done before, and also ministry beyond our church, which we hadn't done before either. As a matter of fact, I do not know if I have ever been part of a church where there has been as much interest in recruiting members to ministry in the community.

This task force worked very hard at getting ready for recruitment. They took the work of another task force which

had worked on securing ministry position descriptions and tried to match people's interests with those positions.

You see, the same time that the recruitment people were getting ready to recruit, another Task Force on Ministry Position Descriptions had gathered the leaders of our church together to describe the different ministry positions and to write things, like what was expected of a person in this position and what this person could expect of the church. It was helpful information.

Back to the recruitment. A relatively small group of people were trained to visit and ask people, maybe I should even say "call" people, to consider giving themselves to some ministries within the life of the church. We even had information about some ministries beyond our church and they were included in the recruitment program. In short, most of the people said yes. They were flattered to sense that they were being recruited on the basis of their interests, skills and abilities.

Another task force, the Task Force on Training, started to shape some training opportunities we thought should be offered. They divided up their work into three areas. They got something going for orientation training that was held on Sunday afternoon and evening. They also set up some twenty-minute training experiences which could be used in our committees and groups. I understand, by the way, that those short training experiences came from another publication of yours about church meetings.

We have, as I've already suggested, worked out a great deal of what you call "on-the-ministry" training at the regular meetings. There was one exception. What happened then was rather interesting.

Our questionnaires indicated that we have about twenty people in the church

who were volunteering in many different ways in the life of our community. Surprise! When they were asked what kinds of things they would like to learn or work at to equip themselves for their volunteer ministries in the community, it turned out that they were pretty similar to some of the things people in our committees and church groups were interested in. So, we had special training sessions which included persons who had ministries within the life of the church and persons with ministries outside the life of the church.

One more thing I need to mention about training was our retreat for persons in ministry. About fifteen people attended. During that retreat, we did some Bible study and worked at the question "How do our ministries relate to what we believe?" That was one of the best retreats I have ever attended.

### **Task Force on Training**

### **Task Force on Training (continued)**

One of the nice things about it was that we did not have to call on any outside people to lead it. The pastor and three

other persons worked very hard in organizing it using some of your Faith Exploration material.

---

### **Task Force on Support and Completion**

About two weeks ago we came to the end of our first year with this program. The Task Force on Support and Completion held a group meeting in which they looked at things you suggested in the guidebook. They had just completed interviews with people who were ending their terms of office on different committees. Some of us were taken by surprise by the number of changes needed in the volunteer ministry position descriptions. I guess that is good. Well, I know it's good, but I was still surprised at the number of suggestions they had. I thought the first position descriptions we wrote were pretty accurate. Maybe they were, for the first time. We now have a better picture, and I understand the task force is going to decide whether or not the volunteer ministry position descriptions should be changed.

In the meeting of persons completing their ministries, people discovered how much they had learned while serving in those positions. They talked about how they thought they could use those learnings in other places. Some of the people involved in community ministries suggested that the groups they were part of were looking for more volunteers. I guess you can say that one of the things that happened was that the church was recruiting for some of those agencies. Before you start thinking that this program was really getting people to leave the church, one woman indicated she would be interested in having a ministry within the church, something she once had not thought would be very interesting or exciting. That is why she had not volunteered before and had always been active in the community, almost to the exclusion of the church.

---

### **Reflection on the Volunteer Ministry Program**

In thinking back over what I have said, I have painted a pretty rosy picture. In many respects, it is true. But I have to admit there were some tough times. I think back over the year and realize there were moments when some of us just disagreed with each other. I would go home at the end of the meeting and wonder about that.

When put together on a balance sheet, I have to say it was worth it! It was worth it because I believe more members of our church think of their involvements as ministry. Another real dividend is that people know what they have been asked to do and have not been recruited in a "catch as catch can" last minute basis. The training programs have added richness to adult education in the church.

Those of us on the Ministry of Volunteers Team, even though we had a

problem every now and then, really had a sense of what we were doing. We understood it and knew how to go about our task. I have to say that the guidebook was extremely helpful to us.

A lot of people have worked hard. We have made mistakes, but the gains outweigh the effort we put into it. Maybe the best sign of all is that the Church Council has decided to elect a new Ministry of Volunteers Team. I think the second year will be easier, but I am proud I was part of the start-up. My business is moving me to another city. When we move there, we will join a new church. If after a while no one is knocking on our door asking the kinds of questions we were asking when we went around with those questionnaires, I think I'll call on the pastor and ask why not.

## Diary of a Pastor of a Small Church

Smalltown, USA: population 600

Rural Church: membership 73; yoked with Smithwood Church, 40 miles away, membership 125

Pastor: Sam Bright in second year of his first pastorate since seminary

Worship Services: 10:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., alternating every two months

Organization:

Parish Committee: property and finance (3 members)

Church Committee: pulpit supply and stewardship (3 members)

Mission Committee: mission and outreach (2 members)

Deacons: spiritual life and worship (2 men, 2 women)

Church School: program and recruitment (3 members)

All committees meet as needed with no set schedule.

Other Programs:

Women's Circle: meets twice a month

Vacation Church School: big event of the year, drawing from the whole community.

Stewardship: No stewardship drive is held. The budget has been stable for the past ten years. People give enough to meet the budget without being asked.

Annual Meeting: held in January. Persons are nominated for all positions, except Deacons, from floor. Deacons elected by secret ballot nominations from floor. Majority vote wins.

### Background

Things are going well, yet, I am frustrated. We need to expand our leadership. The same people seem to be doing everything. Each year at our annual meeting it is like musical chairs. Charles moves to the Deacons from the Church Committee; Ralph moves from Christian Education to the Deacons; and on and on! Forty people attend the meeting, but only a few really see themselves as responsible for leadership. There is no real thinking about where we are going and why.

My interest is raised by reading about *The Ministry of Volunteers*. I'm intrigued, but it seems too big for us. I don't see how we could ever do anything about it. No one here would give that kind of time and energy.

Still, this might be the year. I have been here a year and a half now. They seem to respect me and like me. Maybe we could adapt the notebook to our needs. After all, that is what a resource is for, isn't it? I will think about it . . .!

### Entry 1 September

Surprise! A conversation with Mary today indicated that she is really frustrated with always being on the Parish Committee. It has been five years and she has met resistance every time she suggested she wanted off. Also, she has met that new couple who came for the

first time two weeks ago. She likes them and feels as if they will be a valuable resource if we would learn to involve them in our life.

### Entry 2 September

---

I shared my reading about *The Ministry of Volunteers* and my thinking. "It would be interesting to explore," she said. I am glad. This is an opportunity.

---

**Entry 3  
October**

I'm glad I took a chance and ordered *The Ministry of Volunteers*. I gave Mary and Felipe, who is a member of the Deacons and really concerned about the church, a copy of the guidebook.

They agreed to give it a look and spend next Thursday evening talking with me about it. No strings, but they really seemed interested. We'll see what happens.

---

**Entry 4  
October**

Mary and Felipe are excited! They agree the program as outlined in *The Ministry of Volunteers* is too elaborate for us, but they think there are definitely

some things we could do NOW. We have agreed to meet again next week and to think about it in the meantime. Maybe we are on to something.

---

**Entry 5  
October**

Those folks are realistic, for sure. Their ideas are good, and they realize that we will have to take it easy and move with care if it is not going to backfire on us. What they have suggested—and I agree—is that we go to the Deacons at their next meeting and ask for some new kinds of preparation for the annual meeting.

We'll ask for time at the annual meeting to talk about the mission of Rural Church and some of our hopes and dreams for our church in the next year or two.

We'd like to interview a member of each existing church committee in the next month so we can have position

descriptions for their committees before the annual meeting.

Then, we'll send everyone in the church a copy of a volunteer ministry questionnaire and a copy of the position descriptions prepared by the committees. We would like them to complete the questionnaire and then look at the position descriptions in light of their questionnaires. We want them to think about how they might like to participate in the church next year. We'd also ask them to think about which church members would be good for what positions. Finally, we'd ask them to bring their lists and questionnaires to the meeting.

---

**Entry 6  
November**

We succeeded in getting someone from each committee to meet with us on the Monday before Thanksgiving. We

decided to do our interviews together—for moral support and to save time. Our fingers are crossed.

---

**Entry 7  
November**

Everyone showed up for the meeting except Terri from the Mission Committee. Not bad! Mary agreed to visit her tomorrow. The meeting worked! When we got them talking, they seemed to

have similar feelings that they would like to "spread the tasks around more." They were quite willing to try thinking about the positions in each of their committees and we got pretty good

---

outlines from the conversation. Felipe, Mary and I will meet tomorrow night to polish off the descriptions. We are off and running!

We really worked tonight, but by the end of the evening we could say the position descriptions were finished and ready for mailing after Thanksgiving.

We also reviewed the volunteer ministry questionnaire in the guidebook. We adjusted some of the language. We really do not feel we can talk about ministry in this context yet, as most people don't use that language when talking about their church committee responsibilities. So we will just use "voluntary positions" for now. Even that will be new.

We also have decided to ask for about thirty minutes before the nominations and elections at the annual meeting to begin to introduce folks to the idea that these positions are part of the ministry of members of this "unit" of the people of God. That is an exciting idea, if one really gets hold of it.

We will use some ideas and material from the sessions in the section on orientation of the Ministry of Volunteers Team from the booklet on guiding the program. They were helpful for Felipe, Mary and me as we first talked about this venture. They might also be helpful for others.

**Entry 8  
November**

Mailing is out. Now let's see if the holidays play against us. Hope not.

**Entry 9  
December**

Amazing!! I have had four or five persons call me and ask some questions about the questionnaires. They seemed concerned and interested and promised to fill them out for the annual meeting.

This morning in church I mentioned the questionnaire and explained what we were doing and what we hoped would result from it. Then I asked if there were any questions or comments. People actually got up and spoke. That is something in and of itself, since people are usually hesitant to speak in the sanctuary, to say nothing of speaking in the middle of the worship service. We

carried on a conversation for about ten minutes.

A couple of people complained about the form. Called it an invasion of their privacy. Said they did not see why we needed it and why we had to try to change the way we had been doing things. But a number of others spoke in support of the questionnaire and said they felt it would help us all know each other and spread some of the responsibility around. Others made similar comments to me as they left the service.

Felipe, Mary and I are excited, to say the least!

**Entry 10  
December**

Today we met to plan our annual meeting segments. Jim Jones, a member of the Church Committee and this year's moderator, met with us. He has

been talking to me quite a bit since the questionnaires came out. He is willing to help in any way he can. We assured him we needed all the help we can

**Entry 11  
January**

get—or the church does. I am glad for him. He will be an important ally.

We decided to use the design “God Speaks to the Church,” which is in the booklet on developing a mission statement. That will be our primary framework for the mission statement

segment. I will preach on the church’s mission the day of the annual meeting and will share a summary of the texts I use at the beginning of the annual meeting. That should help keep the statement in the biblical tradition—at least I hope so. God willing!

---

**Entry 12  
January**

Had to meet again to finish the planning. We will follow our mission statement segment with materials from the orientation session for the Ministry of Volunteers Team from the guiding booklet as we had earlier thought. We’ll end with a brief introduction to what we

are doing and why. They will already have heard this, but it is good to rehearse it again and again.

Two nights from now we will know what our work has produced. I feel good!!!

---

**Entry 13  
January**

Praise God for tonight! I think it was a night of new directions and nurture in our community.

We had 62 at the meeting—62! That is 21 more than last year. There was a sense of anticipation, too. People mentioned it to me as they left church this morning and when they came tonight. When we started to talk about our church and what we hoped for its future, people spoke up with force and conviction.

I was also pleased that they brought up some things I had said in my sermon. That not only stroked my ego, it also meant they—consciously or unconsciously—were testing some of their hopes against the biblical tradition, even if that was filtered through me. Oh, here I am again, God, hiding from my calling to be an instrument of your Word. Forgive!

Mary and Felipe led the exploration of the meaning of ministry segment before the nominations and elections. When we asked how many brought their completed questionnaires (a risk we decided to take since we wanted to affirm those who had taken that responsibility seriously), we were pleased to find 40 people had brought them to the meeting. Victory #2!

Before the nominations and elections, we read together the position descriptions. Then we invited the people to indicate those positions in which they would be interested. We put their names on newsprint under the appropriate headings. We were surprised that as many people were willing to indicate preferences as did.

Then we invited them to add more names to the list from their knowledge of other church members. Some more names were added.

At that point, we asked them if they would be willing to let this be a list of nominees. If so, we wanted each of them to select the required number from each list and place those names on the ballot which we had prepared in advance. Election to any position would be by simple majority. Everyone agreed to that procedure and the election took place.

You know—it worked. And it was a step away from the prior practice. Our hope is that we can move to more careful matching in the future, but this was a BIG first step! Some said afterwards that it was the first time they felt part of the whole process—and they were excited about what might happen this year.

At the end of the meeting we all stood in a circle with the newly elected members in the center. I read some Scripture and charged them with their task. Then I invited others to say things to charge or support the new leaders if they wanted to. Five people did. Prayers followed, led by me with the

opportunity for anyone to say sentence prayers. Finally, we all moved in closer and sang, with power and authority, "The Church's One Foundation."

It was a good night. I feel good. Thanks be to God!

Jim called today and suggested that Felipe, Mary, he and I meet soon to review the annual meeting and see what we can do to continue the good feelings and careful work that came out of it. He wants to develop ways to orient and equip people in their new positions and to talk about support. He also wants us to look at how we can identify other

areas—both in Rural Church and in Smalltown—in which people can carry out their ministries. If that is not enough, he also wants to think about the next annual meeting.

I guess we have some work ahead of us. Good. I'm ready!

**Entry 14  
January**



## **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.

---

### **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.

---

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.

