



Filling your Volunteers Cup

SUPPORTING, ENCOURAGING AND EQUIPPING THOSE WHO SERVE IN
OUR MINISTRY

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A Four Part Recipe



There are four different ways that you can make sure volunteers are equipped for ministry and that they want to stick around.

Make up your mind

- ▶ What is your WHY
- ▶ WHY is this ministry important?
- ▶ WHY is this task/role needed?

- ▶ What is the WIN?
- ▶ What does it look like when you have a successful event?

- ▶ Create your mission statement. Be simple, be clear.
- ▶ Create your vision statement. Be simple, be clear.

First of all, you have to decide WHY the ministry exists. Think of your overall church's vision and mission, and see how this fits that mission. Why is it important – and more specifically how does this task or role support that mission

What is your WIN? In other words, what does it look like when the day is done, and you and the volunteer can go home happy? What does it look like when it isn't a win? Do you have a vision statement? Mission statements are overarching simple statements of what you want the ministry to achieve. A vision statement is more HOW you do the ministry.

Mission Statement

To make disciples who love God and others, and who are excited to share that love with the world.

Vision

Safety — Fun — Creative and Intentional Faith Formation — Excellence

At Advent Kids, we will:

1. Provide a safe, engaging, and appropriate environment.
2. Help children and families continue on their path to discipleship.
3. Equip and empower our volunteers to serve and lead with excellence.

Take a minute and make your own mission and vision statements. We didn't come up with the mission statement overnight, nor did we invent it from scratch. Our general denomination statement (I'm UMC) is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Well, that's a bit much for applying to children, and to help volunteers see how serving in children's ministry can do that, so we changed the wording a bit to make it fit our circumstance. Your mission may not change drastically – and it may be exactly your church's mission. And that is okay! Our vision statement is four ways that we see how we carry out that vision – safety, FUN, intentional faith formation, and excellence. In other words, those are the traits, the behaviours we expect from people who are serving with us in ministry.

WHAT do you want me to do???

- ▶ Be CLEAR AND HONEST about what you want them to do.
 - ▶ Give them accurate descriptions about ministry time demands
 - ▶ Hour on Sunday, two times a month, with about an hour prep time the week before
 - ▶ What outside needs? Do they need their own supplies?
 - ▶ How long of a commitment (recommend one year/school year)

We've all taken on a task only to find that the actual task was way more than we thought. A person serving wants to know what they are supposed to do, when, and for how long. When we can give them that information clearly, we help them to live into our mission and vision. Gone are the days when a person is willing to give of their time and talents without thought to other parts of their lives...if that time every really existed. Instead, make sure you give clear guidelines, and that you are willing to stick with it. For instance, we decided halfway through the year that we needed to provide summer faith formation. However, we had already asked people currently serving for only a school year commitment. SO...while I offered them the opportunity to serve in the summer, I also made it clear that this was a going above and beyond kind of thing. Some will take it on, some will not. And that is OKAY!!!

What do you want me to do?

- ▶ Be clear about ministry demands
- ▶ Time required both on Sundays and during the week
- ▶ Prep required
- ▶ Length of service time
- ▶ How will they get lessons/information
- ▶ What does the ministry require in terms of physical needs?
- ▶ What time do they need to be there? What extras are needed?



Be realistic about the demands of the ministry. Very few things we do are a simply show up with no prep kind of things. At a minimum, you would want them to pray for and about their role sometime during the week! One way to make sure you know what is needed is to ask people doing the ministry what they do. Also, be aware of any physical needs – make sure your spaces are accommodating and accessible. Also, be specific about times.

Training Sessions

- ▶ Training sessions
 - ▶ Two a year in person, max
 - ▶ FEED THEM
 - ▶ Provide childcare if needed
 - ▶ Using curriculum? Provide examples and let them explore it
 - ▶ Provide written guidelines of expectations
 - ▶ Remind them of your WHY
 - ▶ Connect them to each other; create a lifegroup from the people they are serving with. We are more likely to serve when we are among friends.

No one really wants to go to more meetings. So make it FUN – food is always good (we usually cater the lunch from a local place – nothing terribly fancy- or create a make your own salad bar or baked potato bar) We try to do a fun giveaway as well. Table decorations of small potted plants are fun, and this year we did a little dollar store spatula with a fun little tag about being our ingredient for success. Providing childcare can be a pain, but if it lets people be involved, it is worth it. Also, be sure to allow time for talking with other people. Relationships can make or break a ministry's success. When people feel connected to each other, they will be more willing to help each other and it also provides a non-authoritarian kind of accountability. They don't want to let each other down. Above all, communicate clearly what you want from them, and what they can expect from you.



Adventkids

LOVE GOD | LOVE OTHERS | GO SHARE

Leader Handbook

Your Guide to Advent Kids Ministry



Ministry Covenant

I promise to make a conscious effort towards my own spiritual formation and present myself as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

I recognize the importance of my role with Advent Kids and agree to treat it as such, by being dependable, reliable, and properly prepared.

I will strive to attend all training meetings for volunteers.

I will commit to serving in Advent Kids for one school year, or the timeline of my event, if shorter.

I will treat children and families of all races, religions, and cultures with respect and love.

I will keep the safety, well-being and security of the children in my care in mind at all times with my actions and words.

I will abide by the policies set forth by Advent UMC and outlined in the Safe Sanctuary policy.

I am aware that I am a representative of Advent UMC and Advent Kids, and that children, parents, visitors, and potential visitors are watching me and my lifestyle. I will do my best to model Christ-likeness in all my behavior and be a positive reflection of Christ and our church, while serving and outside of serving (in public, on social media, etc).

Here's an example. You can, of course, make it as short or long as you wish. But short is better.

Technology is your friend, really.

- ▶ USE TECHNOLOGY!!!!
- ▶ If your volunteers are on Facebook, create a FB group. Use it to post information, videos, requests. Make it private, closed, etc.
- ▶ Consider things like Instagram, Twitter, etc. to do more open information ; Remind is a great alternative to group texts
- ▶ Vimeo is a great alternative to You Tube, but the idea is the same.
- ▶ Short, informative videos can do trainings on specific tasks or ideas.
 - ▶ Don't get hung up on perfection. Information is more important.
 - ▶ Make them password protected
 - ▶ Don't be afraid to laugh. Have fun, and so will your volunteers.



My video isn't anything elaborate or fancy. It wasn't rehearsed twenty times with fantastic lighting. It was just me, talking to my friends who serve with me. You'll be amazed how people respond to that. Of course, you want to make sure you have at least an idea of what you want to say, and make it easy to watch (don't move around too much) and hear.

Lollipop Moments – Dan Dryer



If the video doesn't work – the idea is that we don't always think of ourselves as leaders, because we make leadership something huge and unattainable. Instead, think of leadership as small ways. And your volunteers are leaders – because they are serving others in many ways. He tells the story of how a lollipop given by him to another person had a domino effect. And how often we don't know that we have changed other lives. It's worth watching! <https://youtu.be/uAy6EawKKME>

Lollipop Effect – Let people know they make a difference

- ▶ BIG Lollipops and Little Lollipops
- ▶ Once a year – Dinner, lunch, ice cream social
- ▶ Make it nice, but not stuffy
- ▶ Depending on your people, either do family event or do a grown up event with child care provided
- ▶ Movie Night at church for leaders
- ▶ Larger gift cards for restaurants
- ▶ Devotional for Lent, Advent
- ▶ Easter treat, Christmas treats, etc.
- ▶ Sunday morning? Provide juice, coffee, fruit and Danish
- ▶ Thank you notes (not just via email)
- ▶ Good Communication
- ▶ Verbal thanks
- ▶ Occasional \$5 gift card for going above and beyond
- ▶ A single flower, a creative candy gift, and more
- ▶ Tell them every week (AND MEAN IT) that you are praying for them

Appreciation is different than training and different from support. Appreciation is something that needs to be done in both big and small ways.

I'm not
feeling very
appreciated



Pay attention to your volunteers. See what they like, what they ignore, and more. Something may appeal to you but not to your volunteers. Respect that. Have someone you trust to tell you the unvarnished truth.

Ice Cream Social Advent KIDS leaders



Thoughtfulness Expensive

- ▶ Pinterest is your friend
- ▶ Tie it to the theme of your church, your study, seasons
- ▶ People like things they don't have to keep (ie food, or a pen, or something like that)
- ▶ EVERYONE HAS ENOUGH MUGS
- ▶ Okay, I love mugs, but I don't NEED another one
- ▶ Alternate individual with group things

Volunteer gift ideas can come from PTO's, other non profits, and beyond

- ▶ <https://www.ptotoday.com/pto-today-articles/article/6379-10-quick-and-easy-volunteer-gifts>



Appreciation without support is worthless



Appreciation is great – we all love to hear we are doing a good job on a regular basis



But appreciation without support leaves us feeling put upon, frustrated and overwhelmed.



Overwhelmed volunteers lose sight of the WHY and they lose sight of the vision, mission and the joy.



Lose all that? They walk away

Don't lose people because you are so busy telling them they are doing a great job that you forget to give them the TOOLS to do their job. Write out instructions, create a leader book, continue to provide training. Huddle meetings, 10 min prior to the start can be a way to just give that little bit of support on a weekly basis that might be the difference between success and the volunteer leaving.

How do I support them?

- ▶ Communication
 - ▶ Use a variety of ways – video clips, social media, email, remind, text
 - ▶ Ask which methods work best for them.
 - ▶ Consistent communication is better than flashy communication
 - ▶ Be concise, be clear and allow enough time for response
- ▶ Information
 - ▶ What do they need to consistently do their role?
 - ▶ Morning Huddles
 - ▶ Video Clips
 - ▶ Special tips - children who have different learning styles, how to greet visitors, etc.
 - ▶ Give a little information often

You have GOT to give them information in ways they can hear it. You may think they need to read your email, but if they don't, you're not supporting them. So post things in many different ways. Reach them how you can.

CELEBRATION

- ▶ Celebration is different than appreciation
 - ▶ Celebration is PUBLIC (but doesn't have to be embarrassing)
 - ▶ Celebration is both individual and collective
 - ▶ Verbal Celebration – in worship, in print, on social media
 - ▶ Concrete Celebration – small visible gifts, 'Paper Plate awards', Award statues (unsung heroes)
 - ▶ Celebration states the vision, the mission, the WHY and then HOW that person/persons make it happen

Resources for you

- ▶ Not Normal , 7 Habits of Incredible Volunteers by Sue Miller and Adam Duckworth (also – Leading Not Normal Volunteers)
- ▶ Orange leaders blog - <https://orangeblogs.org/orangeleaders/>
- ▶ Ministry Architects
- ▶ Buildfaith.org
- ▶ Forma facebook page, of course!
- ▶ Pinterest searches for teacher appreciation ideas
- ▶ Think wide – what other areas around you can you borrow ideas from?