

Voices: Thank you, church volunteer

March 28, 2018

I love my church's volunteers.

As their pastor, I see all the hard work they put into the church. I know how many evenings they spend away from their families to advance the kingdom.

I see it all, and I am impressed.

Part of being the pastor of a church, particularly a small church, is that you hear everyone's opinions. That means getting my fair share of complaints, but it also means I am the first in line to hear about someone being blessed by the church.

Whenever anyone sees an answer to a prayer, was helped from some benevolence or was just encouraged by being at church on a Sunday morning, I'm the first to know. I cherish these moments when someone is opening up their heart to me, but my volunteers will rarely ever be the benefactors of such good news.

Whenever I receive a thank you card, an encouraging email or even just a hug around the neck, I am reminded of what amazing things our wonderful God can do through such a broken vessel. I am also inspired to get up the next day and get back to work in anticipation of seeing God's next miracle.

Serving the body

I sincerely wish that my volunteers could receive the same level of praise and gratitude that I get on a weekly basis. I'm not a one-man band, and it

takes the whole body of Christ to complete the mission.

I take my responsibility as my church's primary shepherd very seriously. I spend time in prayer for my people, I prepare all of my messages with diligence and I do what I can to serve my people. I do put in the work, but it takes more than just me to make my church go.

The [average church](#) engages about 43 percent of their members in some volunteer role. I can't tell you the exact number of people at my church that are putting in the hours, but when I look around, I can't find a single ministry of the church that isn't supported or entirely run by volunteers.

There are no small jobs in God's kingdom.

The apostle Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 12 that real ministry effectiveness takes the whole body of Christ working together: "As it is, there are many parts, yet one body."

Sure, people are blessed when they hear the pastor's sermon, but it takes more than just the pastor for that to happen. Someone set the temperature in the room. Someone else amplified the preacher's voice. Another person cleaned up the place beforehand. Others prayed for the service before it happened. A different person greeted everyone at the door with a smile. This list goes on.

Whenever anyone is blessed while they are at church, it is because the Spirit of God was moving through the entire body to be a blessing.

Acknowledging the work

Every Sunday morning before the message starts, I like to acknowledge one of our volunteers publicly. As a part of the worship, we recognize what God has been able to accomplish through a willing servant.

This time of the service has turned into one of my favorites because it gives the whole congregation the opportunity to show their appreciation for the service of their brother or sister. I like to joke that a pastor talking about his congregants is like a grandparent talking about their grandkids. We can go on and on with praises if you don't stop us. It brings joy to my spirit to see my church members loving on one another.

We all know that Jesus is the only irreplaceable person in our churches. All of us could move on, and Jesus would still keep the church running — amen. Jesus Christ is the hope of the world, and his gospel is preached all across our country in local churches.

Those churches are supported by volunteers.

Thank you, church volunteer

If you are a volunteer in any capacity in my church, I want to thank you publicly. From teachers, deacons and musicians to cleaners, fixers and cooks, I'm blessed to serve in the kingdom of God alongside you.

If you are a church volunteer at another church, I hope I can speak for your pastor, reverend or bishop when I thank you for all that you are doing. Hear it from me: your work and your ministry matters. It matters while we're here on earth, and it matters as an eternal blessing as well.

I'm grateful to all the people who give of their time, energies and talents to see the kingdom advance.

Church volunteer, I see what you're doing, and I'm grateful to you for it.

Keep up the good work.

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